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Volume 20, No. 13

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## Looking Ahead

**Sorry Baylor,  
but the Sooners are back**



**Brian Hill**

IT SEEMS LIKE old times ... Well, almost.

Seeing Barry Switzer on the sideline during Oklahoma's victory over Kansas State had to bring back memories to many fans of Nebraska and the old Big Eight.

The Sooners are unbeaten and putting up big numbers. After Saturday's 41-31 triumph over the No. 2 Wildcats, Oklahoma is 6-0 and has scored 104 points in its last two games.

But this is 2000. Switzer has not coached the Sooners since 1988. And, in case you've missed it, the team that once possessed the scariest rushing game around has made a complete transformation.

The program that made the wishbone famous had just 11 rushing yards against Kansas State. The Sooners are averaging 327.3 yards per game passing and 145.5 on the ground.

That's the attack second-year Coach Bob Stoops has chosen to revitalize the Sooner program, the same program that had fallen on hard times when last the Huskers saw it.

Nebraska ripped Oklahoma 69-7 Nov. 1, 1997, and had outscored the Sooners 179-28 in the last three games before the series took a two-year hiatus because of Big 12 Conference scheduling.

The Huskers have won seven straight meetings and nine of the last 10, but it won't be easy when the series is renewed

Oct. 28 in Norman. And the Sooners have a week off to prepare.

My apologies for breaking that golden rule of the Nebraska program: Take one game at a time, and don't look ahead. But it's impossible not to.

After putting together its most complete game this season in a 56-3 smashing of Texas Tech, the top-ranked Huskers play host to Baylor, which has been shut out for two straight games.

The storyline here will be the homecoming of Kevin Steele and Tommie Frazier. Steele, the former linebacker coach at Nebraska, is in his second year as head coach at Baylor. Frazier, who led the Huskers to back-to-back national championships, is in his second year as running back coach for the Bears.

Baylor is young and inexperienced and shouldn't provide much of a test for the Huskers. The game should provide another chance for the Husker reserves to get some playing time.

That was a big positive of the blowout in Lubbock.

Backup quarterback Jammal Lord played almost an entire quarter, and several other reserves saw significant action.

The improving Husker defense got the chance to face a passing offense similar to Oklahoma's, and it passed the test with flying colors. The heat has been turned up the last game and one half, and that can do wonders for the secondary.

It isn't always the number of sacks a team gets, but constant pressure and a few knockdowns will get a quarterback's attention. I think Texas Tech's Kliff Kingsbury would agree.

You'll find lots more inside on the Huskers' latest victory, as well as a look ahead. Contributing editor Mike Babcock has a look at the increased emphasis on special teams following Notre Dame's two runbacks earlier this season.

And prepare yourself for the shootout with Oklahoma Oct. 28. Haven't you kind of missed the Sooners? ■



## ON THE COVER

Joe Walker races toward the end zone with an interception for Nebraska's first touchdown. *Photo by Joe Don Buckner, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*

*(Editor's Note: Last week's cover photo was misidentified in this space. That cover, as pictured in From the Editor on this page, showed rush end Kyle Vanden Bosch sacking Iowa State quarterback Sage Rosenfels)*

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# Huskers Illustrated

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## 12 Special Teams

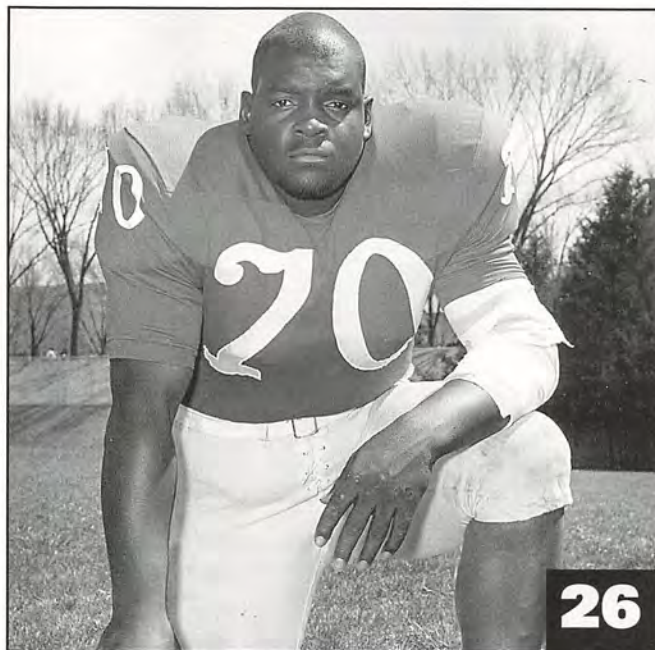
After Notre Dame returned a punt and a kickoff for touchdowns, the Huskers began to spend more time on the kicking game. *By Mike Babcock*

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Christine Latham celebrates after scoring the tying goal against Texas A&M on Oct. 8 in Lincoln.

## MOVIN' ON UP

After a 4-0 win over Texas and a 2-1 victory over 14th-ranked Texas A&M, the 14-0 Nebraska soccer team moved up from third to second in the poll released by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

The Huskers, rated No. 3 since Sept. 7, had not been ranked higher than third in the 6 1/2-year history of the program.

The victory over A&M left NU 5-0 in the Big 12 Conference. Senior goalkeeper Karina LeBlanc held a conference-best 0.32 goals-against average, and sophomore forward Christine Latham led the league with 15 goals and 33 points. ■

# Instant Replay Isn't Imminent

Penn State lined up second-down-and-4 at the Nebraska 17-yard line with time running out at Beaver Stadium in State College, Pa., in 1982. Cornhusker fans still remember.

Tight end Mike McCloskey caught a pass from Todd Blackledge at the 2-yard line for a first down. He was out-of-bounds, but the official ruled he wasn't. On the next play, Blackledge tossed a touchdown pass to Kirk Bowman, also a tight end, and Penn State won the game 27-24.

The Nittany Lions went on to win the national championship, while Nebraska finished the season 12-1 and ranked third. With a video replay, the Cornhuskers might have been perfect. And Coach Tom Osborne might not have had to wait until 1994 for his first national championship.

If video replay had been used in the 1993 college football season, Osborne might have gotten his first national title a year earlier. On review, officials might have ruled that Florida State's William Floyd lost control of the ball before breaking the plane of the goal on a third-quarter touchdown.

And without that touchdown, Nebraska might have won the game.

Those are among the most dramatic instances of controversial plays that, if overturned by a video replay, could have altered the course of Cornhusker football history.

Even so, Coach Frank Solich doesn't necessarily favor a replay system. "The thing I don't like most about instant replay is that the game of college football is long enough now with TV timeouts and all, and I don't think we need to slow the game down any more," he told the Lincoln Journal Star.

Video replays in college games was a subject of considerable national discussion early this season after two late-game fumble calls went against Illinois in a 35-31 loss against Michigan.

On the first, an Illinois ball carrier was down, and the officials ruled he was not. And on the second, a Michigan ball carrier wasn't down, and the officials ruled he was.

Television replays clearly showed the mistakes, and the next week David Parry, the Big Ten's coordinator of officiating as well as the national coordinator for officiating for the NCAA, acknowledged as much but said that the use of instant

replay in college was highly unlikely.

Probably the biggest obstacle to overcome would be the expense. Even in NCAA Division I-A relatively few games are televised, and there would still be an expense for those.

Television trucks might have most of the necessary equipment, but "the TV truck is there to do the game for TV. It's not there to do the game for the officials to look back and forth, back and forth, back and forth from all the different angles," said Jeff Schmahl, head of Nebraska's HuskerVision.

"If, on the average college weekend, there are 50 Division I games being played, which is probably pretty close, maybe 20 of them are on TV. And even then it's not a given that now it's easy. There would be a tremendous amount of logistical things you would have to have before you got started.

"And the TV networks, 'Oh, now are we going to help dictate the outcome of the games?'"

If NBC, which has a contract to televise Notre Dame home games, showed replays that negatively impacted the Fighting Irish, "everybody's going to hate NBC," Schmahl said.

So "the producer goes, 'Don't show it from that angle.'"

The cost of setting up a replay system similar to the one used by the National Football League would be prohibitive, according to Schmahl. The machine capable of receiving multiple signals from various angles costs approximately \$150,000 and "then you have to wire the stadium," he said.

And an official would have to be able to view the replays on the field.

HuskerVision's state of the art system has that capability in the Devaney Sports Center for basketball games. But few, if any schools, have comparable systems. And that doesn't solve the football problem, anyway. "We have the ability to show a replay down on the court," Schmahl said.

"The trouble is, we would have to fade our screens to black and then feed that monitor on the court. The last thing you want to do is be showing these replays to the crowd.

"So you have to have kind of a separate source."

The bottom line on instant replay for college games is the bottom line. It's just too expensive. ■

## COMPLIMENTS TO CATCHERS

Nebraska coach Frank Solich recently complimented Nebraska's pass receivers, including Matt Davison, Tracey Wistrom and Bobby Newcombe in particular. "They're an excellent group," he said.

"I would have to guess that when you add that total package up, they would have to compare with any of the great receivers that we've had here. Teams worry about Matt Davison. I think they worry about Tracey Wistrom. I think they worry about Bobby Newcombe."

Opponents also worry about quarterback Eric Crouch, "not only running but throwing it to those guys," said Solich. "I think they're given a lot of respect. And I think it's been well earned."

## COWBOY UP

Defensive tackle Loran Kaiser suffered an injured left foot in the first quarter of the Missouri game but tried to return in the second half, lasting only three plays before going to the sideline for good.

He and middle linebacker Carlos Polk, who suffered an ankle sprain, "were talking on the sideline about 'cowboy-ing up,' or something like that," Kaiser explained afterward.

"He started kidding around with me so I just tried to make one last attempt. He was back in there. I couldn't let him one-up me. But I wasn't making any progress and I wasn't accomplishing a whole lot. So I just came back out. I could have hobbled around, but I couldn't do anything."

The term "cowboy up" is from the 1994 movie "8 seconds," about the late Lane Frost, a rodeo bull-rider. Eight seconds refers to the amount of time a rider has to stay on the bull.

## LOOKS CAN BE DECEPTIVE

Offensive tackle Dave Volk seems quiet, almost to the point of reticence, around reporters. But "he's the life of the party," said roommate Casey Nelson. "He's the funniest guy I've ever met."

Offensive line coach Milt Tenopir had some reservations about Volk when recruiting him out of Battle Creek, Neb. "I really didn't know what kind of football player he would be," Tenopir said. "The question was whether he'd have any fire or not. But once you got him on the field, he had that spunk you're looking for. He's an intelligent guy. He prides himself in doing things right, not doing them halfway."

"He was a pleasant surprise for me, at least, and I'm sure others, in the fact that he came along as quickly as he did in the system. He's a laid-back guy. But he's extremely competitive." ■



Loran Kaiser

# QUICK HITS

*What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?*

## POLICY CLARIFICATION

Frank Solich has instituted to policy of not identifying specific injuries to his players unless those injuries cause the player to miss a game. "I don't know that it's fair to our player that's injured to just announce that at the beginning of the week," Solich said by way of explanation.

Also, divulging information about injuries early in the week might give opponents a competitive advantage. "We won't get much information coming back that way," said Solich.

"It makes sense to me that if a player is not going to be able to play for certain, if he's out, then we're not going to try to disguise that and get to a game and all of a sudden have the guy in street clothes. I don't think it makes sense to start telling people where you're at until you know where you're at."

## INDIANA CONNECTION

Brennon Clemmons, a 6-foot-2, 185-pound point guard, has made an oral commitment to accept a scholarship to play basketball for new Cornhusker head coach Barry Collier.

Clemmons, who's from Indianapolis, is a sophomore at Olney, Ill., Central junior college. He averaged 10.1 points, 6.1 rebounds, 3.1 steals and 1.5 assists there last season.

Clemmons' coach at Olney Central, Jim Glash, told the Omaha World-Herald, "As a rule we don't let our athletes commit early. But Coach Collier does about the best job we know of combining basketball, academics and bringing good people into a program."

The NCAA's early-signing period is Nov. 8-15.

Clemmons is the fourth player reported to have made a non-binding oral commitment to the Cornhuskers. The others are Jake Muhleisen, a 6-foot-3 guard from Lincoln, Neb.; Dan Heimos, a 6-foot-11 center from Waterloo, Ill., and Cory Simms, a 6-foot-5 guard from St. Louis.

## SWIMMING SUSPENSIONS

Cal Bentz, the Nebraska men's and women's swimming coach, and three of his assistants have been suspended pending a university investigation into possible NCAA rules violations in the program.

Associate head coaches Rick Paine and Kelly Nordell also were suspended, as was assistant coach Keith Moore. Assistant Paul Nelson was named interim head coach.

Athletic Director Bill Byrne said in a release that he would not comment on "personnel matters."

Tim Neumann resigned his position as Husker wrestling head coach one day after being suspended in April, following an announcement that the university would investigate rules violations in the wrestling program. The NCAA has yet to impose sanctions as a result of that investigation.

## RETIRE? MAYBE NOT

Merlene Ottey, who was honored as the outstanding athlete in the first 25 years of the Nebraska women's program, indicated that she would retire after competing for Jamaica in her sixth Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia. But apparently the 40-year-old sprinter has had second thoughts.

"I'm not sure actually," she told the Associated Press in Sydney.

"I had such a rough year. It's been a fight trying to get on the (Jamaican Olympic) team. I had just two months to prepare . . . but I'm happy I came. I will consider continuing on."

Ottey ran the anchor leg on the silver-medal-winning 400-meter relay team.

Under the circumstances, "I thought I did a fantastic job," she said. She was suspended by the International Amateur Athletic Federation in July of 1999 after a positive drug test. An IAAF arbitration board lifted the suspension a year later.

## HUSKERS 50/50

Katie Robinette, a 6-foot-2 senior basketball player at South Sioux City, Neb., High School, told the Lincoln Journal Star in early October that she had narrowed her college choices to Nebraska and Iowa State. Robinette, who is rated among the top seniors in the nation as well as the state, said she planned to make her decision prior to the NCAA's early-signing period in mid-November. ■

## He Liked Wearing Red

*Sophomore walkon Terpening grew up in Oregon but always wanted to be a Husker*



**Mike  
BABCOCK**

AARON TERPENING wore a Big Red jacket to school when he was a fifth-grader. It was made by Starter and said "Nebraska" on the back. Terpening's parents ordered it from Footlocker.

Such jackets are commonplace in elementary and secondary schools across Nebraska, bright red evidence of the state's affection for the Cornhuskers. But Terpening grew up in Oregon.

That's why his jacket had to be special ordered.

Terpening's fifth-grade friends were curious about the jacket and asked if he intended to go to Nebraska to play football when he got older. Yes, he told them, that was his plan. "You can never predict the future," he said recently. "But that's what I hoped I would do some day."

Some day is now for the sophomore defensive back from North Salem, Ore.

Although he is a lower-unit rover, he's a starter on the punt return and kickoff teams. And he has played well enough on them that he wasn't among those the coaches considered replacing after the Cornhuskers' well-documented breakdowns on special teams early in the season.

In fact, on one kickoff in the Notre Dame game, he "actually hit a double-team, got off the block and made the play at the 18-yard line," said Jeff Jamrog, one of the special-teams coaches.

"He's done an excellent job. Aaron's a 'bullet-head.' He's a Lance Gray-type."

Being compared to Gray (1991-93), who earned the nickname "Bullethead" for his reckless abandon on kickoff coverage, is the ultimate compliment for a Nebraska special teams player.

Terpening "isn't quite there," Jamrog said. "He hasn't knocked anyone out yet."

But he plays with a similar determination and seeming disregard for his own well-being.

"People have asked me, 'Do you like to hit?' I say, 'Of course.' I don't see why someone would ask you that. I mean, I grew up knowing that's how you play football," the 5-foot-11, 190-pound Terpening said. "You give up your body. To me, I'm not doing anything special or good."

And, he was quick to add, "I'm not crazy or anything like that."

There might have been a few who questioned his sanity when he decided to walk on at Nebraska, after being turned down as a potential scholarship recruit following his senior year in high school.

Terpening's high school coach sent film to Nebraska, and Nebraska sent a form letter in reply, saying in essence, "This kid probably isn't good enough to be on scholarship."

It was "kind of like they weren't interested," said Terpening.

Kind of like? The response couldn't have been much

more direct.

His high school coach was persistent, however, and contacted Cornhusker defensive backs coach George Darlington about the possibility of Terpening's walking on.

Darlington asked for more film. Terpening visited Nebraska just before the spring game. And Nebraska invited him to walk on. "I just felt like everything was set up here for football players to succeed, as long as someone is willing to work," he said. "If you work hard, you'll progress."

And he was willing to work hard to play for the Cornhuskers.

Terpening inherited an interest in Nebraska football from his dad, who lived in Lincoln "when he was a kid," Terpening said. "I was born and raised in Oregon, but I was raised a Husker fan."

"My dad was such a Husker fan that it was a childhood dream of mine to come out here. The Lord opened the door for me, and it was hard to turn down such an opportunity."

"There were places I could have gone that would have been a lot cheaper for me to go to school. And I wouldn't have had to pay at a couple of places. I kind of came down to, it was a greater risk to come here. But if things worked out, there was a greater reward, being able to play for the Huskers."

Terpening's story is both typical and unique. He sat out his first season as a redshirt, then played enough on special teams last season to earn a letter. He has earned a gold practice jersey and early this season he was told to move to the varsity locker room in the South Stadium.

Those are "just small steps," he said. But they indicate he is making progress.

"Hopefully through the course of the season I can get more and more experience, more playing time, learn my plays better and start competing for the job (at rover)," he said.

Even though he's living a childhood dream, Terpening has had his struggles. "Emotionally and mentally it's tough sometimes, frustrating, and you can easily get down on yourself when you feel like you have no chance," he said. "Younger guys may come in on scholarship and instantly be in front of you. Anyone who sticks it through has incredible patience and endurance."

Most of his friends back home, some of whom might even remember the Big Red jacket from fifth grade, have been "really supportive," he said. "Usually there are two different reactions."

"They either think you're way better than you actually are and you're some kind of All-American super player, or else they think, 'Oh, you're walking on. You must be a crap-py player.'"

The truth is, "it's somewhere in between," said Terpening. ■



**Aaron Terpening is a member of the No. 1 kickoff team.**

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# Supporting Cast Changes

*Vanden Bosch, Polk might not look as effective with younger players around them*



**Bob SCHALLER**

THE QUESTIONS COME, rapidly and to the point.

At times they are scathing, and to those, there is no valid response, nor even the need to offer a response. Indeed, for a radio caller to suggest that the Blackshirts like being trampled or torn apart is absurd.

To be sure, the attitude about winning has not dropped off at all on defense. Just the ability to get the job done has suffered, and once the younger players learn their roles, the defense should be improved. However, it will take time. And some of the better players from this year's team won't be around to sow the fruits of their labor. That's just life — and just college football, where the shelf life is five years for the entire career, and about two years for many players, who only get into the starting lineup as juniors and seniors.

So many factors go unnoticed by fans and journalists alike.

Many times I have been asked why Kyle Vanden Bosch and Carlos Polk aren't dominating like they did last year.

Vanden Bosch was a sack machine. This year, until the Iowa State game, he had pretty much been held in check.

Or had he?

One of those factors fans don't look at is who surrounds Vanden Bosch. Last season, he had an experienced rush end on the other side in senior Aaron Wills. In the middle, he had a great push coming from Steve Warren. That push did two things: It forced the quarterback out of the pocket, often toward Vanden Bosch; and it made teams use an extra blocker on Warren, leaving Vanden Bosch to only beat one player to reach the quarterback.

So it's not really fair to say Vanden Bosch isn't playing as well as he did last year. Jared Tomich went through the same thing until Grant Wistrom came into his own.

Polk is in a similar boat — the defense, also known as a boat that has taken on a lot of water this season. Last year, Polk had a pair of seniors on either side of him. Those outside linebackers knew where to be on every play. They knew their roles so well mentally that Polk didn't have to do any traffic directing, which he has had to do this season with newcomers on either side.

There's no doubt that the Huskers' middle linebacker next year will be better off because Scott Shanle and Randy Stella will have more experience under their belts.

Polk simply has more to do this year. Last year, the play often came to him. Not only did Julius Jackson, Tony Ortiz, Eric Johnson and Brian Shaw know their roles, but they also made play after play. That, in turn, directed a lot of opportunities to Polk. Even when the outside linebackers forced the play outside, Polk was able to close and make a

tackle. But again, because the outside linebackers were able to dictate the ebb and flow of the opposing offense, it made Polk look better a lot of the time.

And that's not to say Polk isn't a great linebacker because he is. Based on all the factors, it could easily be argued that Polk is actually playing better this year than last year, even though it doesn't seem like he's all over the field.

Without rover Mike Brown, another defensive playmaker is off the field. The truth is that there is no tackler in the secondary this year that even resembles Brown, or his nose for the ball. Without that run support forcing the play toward Polk, he has to chase it down and hope the new players learning their roles haven't made a mistake or botched a responsibility.

The Huskers do, indeed, miss having a real tackler in the secondary who can offer run support.

Even the secondary is getting its share of rip jobs from radio call-in shows. Often, the same receiver for the other team will beat the Huskers play after play. These opposing "go-to" guys are going to get the ball thrown their way, and Nebraska knows it. Yet the passes are consistently completed.

So what is wrong with the defensive backs?

Well, once again the answer might not be all about the secondary. While there's no question that the secondary has made mistakes, there's always no way to argue that the pass rush hasn't been there.

The "push" from the defensive line has been non-existent. That's why a Missouri or Iowa State can abandon the running game — in essence, concede it — to Nebraska, because it knows it can beat Nebraska through the air.

Any defensive coach — or defensive back, for that matter — will tell you that it is much easier to look good if the secondary only has to cover a guy for one or two seconds, instead of for three, four or five seconds. If the quarterback is scrambling or on the run, he will invariably make mistakes or bad decisions.

However, if he has five or six seconds to decide where to throw it — and thus go through first, second and even third reads — then he will find an open man, if there is no pass rush. The lack of a pass rush allows the opposing quarterbacks to both find an open receiver and not force the ball to a covered receiver, which often happens when the quarterback is pressured and doesn't have time for second or third reads.

Question the outcome. Question some of the schemes. But don't question the heart. Or the attitude. ■



**Carlos Polk** was a pre-season first-team All-American selection by *The Sporting News*.

**Bob Schaller** covers the Huskers for the North Platte Telegraph and Scottsbluff Star-Herald. He can be reached at [schallerrc@aol.com](mailto:schallerrc@aol.com).

## Establishing Discipline

*New basketball coach Collier accepts short-term cost for long-term gain*



**Curt McKEEVER**

THERE'S A LOT about Barry Collier that players on the Nebraska men's basketball team have yet to discover.

But you can be sure when Collier rounded up his new troop for its first practice last Saturday, no one was late. Or if they were, they had a legitimate reason.

As they've already come to know, Collier has little tolerance for excuse-makers.

Since he was hired to replace the fired Danny Nee last April, the Cornhuskers have undergone a major facelift.

First, Collier dismissed reserve forward Kenny Booker.

Then, Eddie Baker, a high school player signed by Nee, didn't make grades and opted to attend junior college.

Louis Truscott, in line to start at small forward after averaging 8.2 points and 5.5 rebounds last season, transferred to Houston.

And in September, last year's starting point guard, Danny Walker, became the second player dismissed.

Throw in suspensions levied against Kimani Ffriend and Rodney Fields, and season-ending wrist surgery for junior college transfer Danai Young, and you've got a team that will play its season opener at Oral Roberts on Nov. 18 with just eight available scholarship players.

And when point guard John Robinson II, a mid-year transfer from New Mexico, becomes eligible after first semester, he, too, will serve a three-game suspension before playing his first contest.

Talk about getting behind the eight ball.

"Establishing discipline in our program is a short-term cost for a long-term gain," Collier said after releasing Walker. "Discipline in our program is simple, just not easy (to follow)."

The Huskers are learning, albeit painfully.

Under Nee, they were given a lot of flexibility. And they took advantage of that slack.

Collier has wasted no time tightening things up.

"Coach Collier pretty much said this is the way it's going to be, and if you don't like it you can leave or do what you want, but this is how he's going to run his program," senior guard Cookie Belcher said, "I think he wants to establish that (control) first."

Collier's new players are learning there's a price to be paid for being late for meetings, workouts, class. And for treating people with anything but the utmost respect.

They're also coming to understand that he's got their best interests in mind.

On the basketball court, "we want to get them to play hard. The team must show that intensity, desire and passion," said Collier, who must try and win back a dwindling fan base that had become apathetic.

His promise to them is simple.

"I know that 16 times next year there will be a team in Devaney that is going to be trying to earn the respect and support of our fans."

Nebraska will be no one's pick to win the Big 12.

Heck, the Huskers probably won't receive many votes to finish in the upper division.

But Collier is no stranger to proving people wrong.

When he returned to his alma mater Butler University in 1989, he took over a program that had produced just three winning seasons in the past 15. He left 11 seasons later having guided the Bulldogs to nine above-.500 campaigns and at least 22 wins in each of his final four at the school.

And though he inherits leftovers from a team that went a disastrous 11-19 last year, he also has a group of experienced players. Four of the scholarship players are seniors. Another six are juniors.

"One of the dynamics at work here is that the sand is running out of the hourglass. And they were not successful last year, so there's every reason to believe most of them will work very hard and be very willing to do whatever to have success their senior year," Collier said. "There are some good players here. Now we've got to get them to play well, which is to stay together and play hard all the time."

No doubt, Collier will build his first Nebraska team around Ffriend and Belcher.

The 6-foot-11 Ffriend was second-team all-Big 12 last season after averaging 12 points, 8.8 rebounds and 2.8 blocks per game.

Belcher, who was granted a medical hardship after having to halt his comeback from wrist surgery following a four-game trial last season, was a third-team all-league pick as a junior two years ago. He is NU's career steals leader with 271, which, among returning players nationally, is 56 more than the No. 2 person.

Belcher admits he's still finding it awkward adjusting from the open-minded, shoot-from-the-hip Nee to Collier, who chooses his words carefully and is detail-oriented.

"Once practice gets going and we're around him every day, then that comfort level will be best and everyone will feel better," Belcher said. "It'll be good for us."

Collier signed a five-year contract with a base salary of \$200,000 per year.

As practice was about to begin, Belcher had a good hunch the Huskers' new coach already had done a lot to earn his keep.

"I think Coach Collier expects more out of us than Coach Nee did," he said.

How much more? The Huskers are about to find out. ■



**Barry Collier has made a number of changes in the Husker basketball roster.**

*Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.*

# Special

## *Notre Dame's long returns bring more attention to Husker kicking game*

**By Mike Babcock**

**A**t his weekly news conference on the Tuesday before the Missouri game, Frank Solich was asked if middle line-backer Carlos Polk was going to play on special teams.

"Yes," Solich replied, adding, "not on all special teams, though."

He also was asked if quarterback Eric Crouch might play on special teams.

The question was asked tongue-in-cheek.

"No," Solich answered, laughing.

"No, Eric will not be doing . . ."

Solich didn't complete the thought, realizing that further clarification wasn't necessary. But, he added with characteristic honesty, Crouch "could be an excellent punt returner."

Crouch is sure-handed and shifty. And he's one of the team's fastest players. But obviously he's too important to the Cornhuskers to be exposed to the physical hazards of returning punts.

The play of Nebraska's special or kicking teams was a subject of serious discussion early in the season. The Cornhuskers' punt and kickoff coverage teams, in particular, attracted unwanted attention as a result of touchdowns on a punt return and a kickoff return in the Notre Dame game.

And as long as kicking teams were the subject, the others weren't playing well either.

That was a surprise to Solich, as conference play began, because "I felt we were going to be an excellent special-teams team again," he said. "And I still feel that way."

"It's just taking us way too long to get there."

By mid-season, Nebraska's special teams showed signs of playing well enough to regain their relative anonymity. Special teams are like small children. Most of the time, they should be seen not heard. But getting to that point required a few personnel changes and a lot of discussion.

"It's taken away time from coaches because in our meetings, we're spending more time than we normally would on special teams," said Solich. "And it's actually taken a little bit more time during practices than what we normally would use for special teams' time."

"But it seems to me it's time well spent."

It's time well spent if there's improvement, anyway.

"We need to start seeing signs that it's time well spent," Solich said.

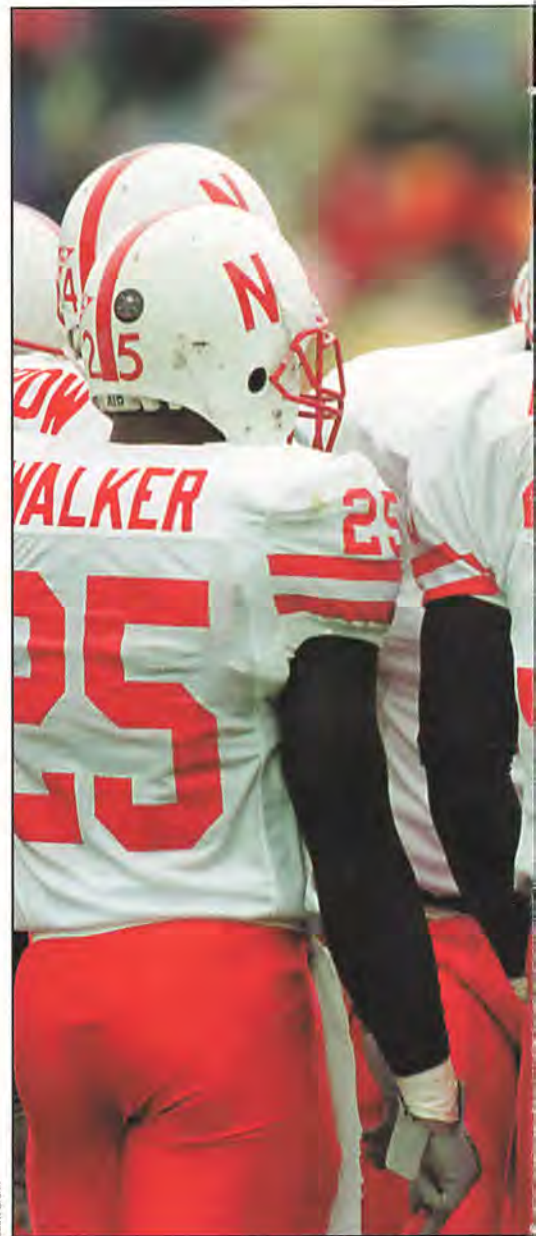
To that end, Polk and some other veterans were drawing special teams duty.

"That point has been reached," said Solich. "We're looking at getting it done special teams-wise at all costs. That may mean (using) players that maybe you wouldn't feel you would like to have on the special teams because of the fact that you don't have depth at their spot (position)."

Because the Cornhuskers were in dire straits from the standpoint of special teams, "you've just got to go beyond that now. You've got to not worry about whether a guy will play out," he said.

"I think right now we play them hard on special teams and if they need a break, we give them a break through the course of the traditional down, from the offensive . . . and defensive standpoint."

"Playing out" is coach-speak for



wearing down physically, something that can happen to top-unit players who are regularly used on special teams. If a defensive player such as Polk is on the punt return team, for instance, then he's going to be on the field one down longer. And if he's on the punt coverage team, then he's going to be on the field one down before he would be there otherwise.

So his position coach must decide when to give him a breather.

# Focus



Members of the kickoff team, including Joe Walker (25), Dahrran Diedrick (30), Chris Kelsay (57), Troy Hasselbroek (89) and Mark Vedral (9) get instructions from Nebraska assistant coach Dan Young during the Missouri game Sept. 30

The "ideal situation," according to Jeff Jamrog, who helps coach special teams, is depth at a position that also lends itself to special teams play, such as linebacker and defensive back.

Players at those positions have speed and aggressiveness, essential qualities for kick coverage.

"You'd like to have it like last year," Jamrog said, using the strong-

side linebackers as an example. "You have Tony Ortiz running down on a kickoff. He's winded because he just ran 65 yards. So you go in the next play with Brian Shaw. Even if Tony is playing better than Brian, after one or two plays, you put him back in." In the mean time, there's little or no dropoff on defense with Shaw in the game.

The Cornhuskers weren't able to do that early this season because so many defensive starters weren't experienced, much less their back-ups. "A lot of times when you have an inexperienced defense you're going to find that your special teams are probably going to be inexperienced, too," Solich said.

"You're drawing on a lot of defen-

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sive personnel to be key performers on your special teams. So consequently, last year if you looked at it, we had a very experienced defensive football team and we had excellent special teams. We were two-deep at both the Will and Sam backers. We were able to use all four of those guys because of that on special teams. And it played out very big for us."

As with any other area on defense or on offense, it comes down to "developing young guys as special teams players," he said. "It's a learning process. Sometimes they'll be blocked. Sometimes they'll be out of the lane. All of those things can occur. You just hope that they don't occur to the point where it's devastating to you. It was certainly close to that in the Notre Dame game, as you know."

The return of weakside linebacker Mark Vedral bolstered the special teams because of his experience on them and because he can rotate with Randy Stella on defense. In addition, senior defensive backs Clint Finley and Troy Watchorn have drawn special teams duty, as has junior Keyuo Craver.

Whatever it takes, the Cornhuskers have done — short of allowing Crouch to return punts. ■

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# Much of Experience Comes During Games

The best way to develop special teams players is to let them play.

Consider Nebraska's kickoff return team. "Hopefully, we're getting a lot of opportunities to kick off because we're scoring a lot of points," defensive tackles coach Jeff Jamrog said.

"Guys will get better with experience."

In the case of the kickoff team, the experience almost has to come in games. The Cornhuskers use scout squads for special teams in practice, of course. But some players are on both the kickoff and kickoff return teams, which makes matching No. 1's against No. 1's impossible.

"They can't all go at the same time," said Jamrog.

"And their replacements may not give you the kind of look that you want. That's what's so key in anything you do, what kind of look you're getting on scout teams."

In addition, coaches are hesitant to line up the first-team kickoff and kickoff return units because of the nature of kickoffs. "You have severe collisions going on," he said. "If

you get a guy's shoulder knocked out or a concussion or something, you guys would have a press conference saying, 'Why is our middle linebacker out for the season, or a rush end or a player at another key position?'"

Successful special teams depend on every player handling his responsibility.

"If one guy cannot do the job, depending on where the ball's being returned, it could be a big play. And everyone notices," Jamrog said. "Unfortunately, that's what has happened."

"One or two guys have had a breakdown that can be exploited."

"The difference in special teams is, you may get only five kickoffs (in a game). The opportunity is not there like (it is) on defense. A linebacker or a defensive lineman may be in 40 or 50 plays. There are a couple of plays where, hey, you wish he had (them) over because he didn't get the job done."

"But the normal fan doesn't see what the result could have been."

On a botched kickoff coverage, the fans often see the result. ■



Jeff Jamrog

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# Buckhalter Stays Focused

*Senior I-back remains friends with departed teammate Evans*

**C**orrell Buckhalter regularly talks with DeAngelo Evans. "Usually every other week, on Sunday, he calls me," said Buckhalter. "We just talk about how things are going. He asks me about things up here. I ask him about things down there."

"Things have been going pretty smooth for him at Emporia State."

Buckhalter and Evans were Nebraska teammates until early last season, of course. Evans transferred to Emporia State after being dismissed from the team by Coach Frank Solich.

He might have been allowed to return if a majority of players hadn't voted against it. And he aggravated an already acrimonious situation by publicly criticizing Solich.

"I don't think it was right for him to do what he did," Buckhalter said of Evans. But, Buckhalter was quick to add, "I didn't feel it was right for the guys to vote him off the team."

The experience was difficult for Buckhalter, who subsequently left the team briefly himself and was suspended from the California game. But he handled things better than Evans did. "I've been through some ups and downs, but I was able to stay focused and persevere," said Buckhalter.

He also was able to remain friends with Evans, when many others could not.

Evans is "one of my closest friends since I've been here. 'Jello' is a great person," he said.

Evans was among the first players to befriend him when he arrived at Nebraska from Collins, Miss., as an awestruck freshman in 1997. Evans was a sophomore at the time.

The two hit it off right away, not only because they both were I-backs but also because "I think we're both down-to-earth guys," Buckhalter said. "We were both raised from great families."

"I think that's what it boils down to. The guys you hang around with, they all come from great families. And you were raised on the same level."

Buckhalter and Evans were linked

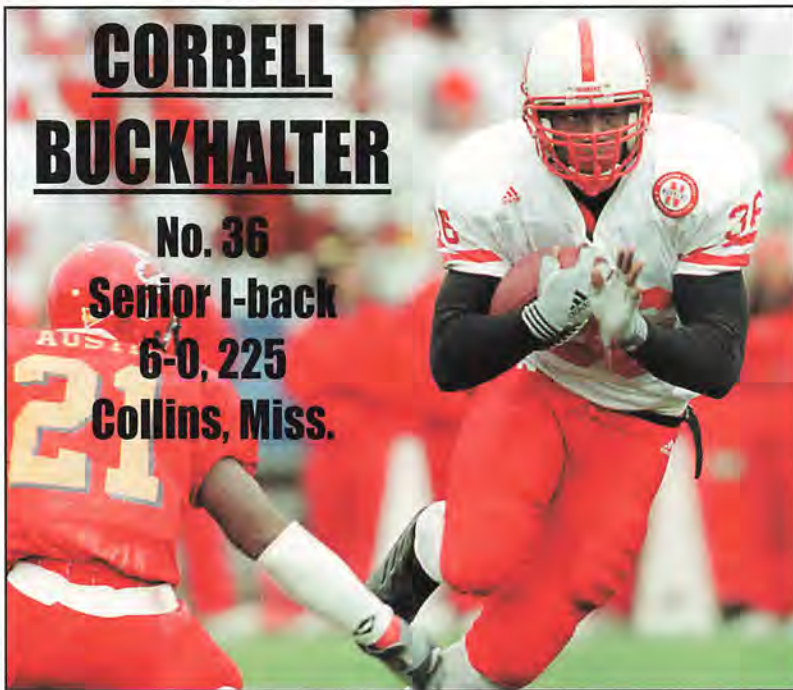
## CORRELL BUCKHALTER

**No. 36**

**Senior I-back**

**6-0, 225**

**Collins, Miss.**



in another way as well. Evans was bothered by an abdominal injury, which forced him to take a medical redshirt in 1997. That contributed to a concern about depth at I-back and led to Buckhalter's being one of six true freshmen to play without redshirting.

If Evans had been healthy, Buckhalter probably would have sat out his first season.

Even though he has played straight through, "I think it's great to redshirt," said Buckhalter. "That's what I tell a lot of guys nowadays. If you get redshirted, it's not a negative against you."

Also, he added, "you might find yourself going into your senior year and you'll be like, 'Man, this is my senior year, and I don't think I really got anything done here.'"

His Cornhusker career has gone quickly, "in the blink of an eye," he said. But he's not concerned that he'll come to the end of this season and feel as if he hasn't accomplished anything.

"My career has been successful," he said.

Buckhalter has been reliable, as a starter as well as a back-up, and he's been durable. "I've just been blessed not to be injured so badly that I had to miss a game," he said.

"That's something I thank God for, my durability."

Coach Frank Solich has regularly mentioned that in assessing Buckhalter's contributions to the team. "One of the things he (has done) was what not all backs can do and that's play hurt," Solich said. "He played hurt a great deal last season. I think this year he's (been) feeling pretty good."


"Backs are always going to have a few things bothering them . . . as they go through a season. Correll has been excellent in terms of his attitude and his work habits, ever since he's been here. We're really pleased with the team player he is, and we're really pleased with his productivity, too."

Buckhalter not only has been a team player, he has stuck by teammates when others have not. Evans is a case in point. "He's been supportive of me," said Buckhalter. "He's doing fine."

The two talk about football and "we just talk about life in general, too, what do you plan to do once your career in football is over? We always talk about that."

Buckhalter would like an opportunity to play professionally. But if that doesn't happen, he's going to be prepared for something else. He's on pace to complete a degree in sociology in May.

"There are opportunities out there for me," he said. ■



Nebraska I-back Correll Buckhalter tries to break the tackle of Texas Tech's Devin Lemons. Buckhalter rushed for 105 yards and one touchdown.

**Nebraska 56**  
**Texas Tech 3**

# Complete

## *Ground game, defense too much for Tech*

**By Mike Babcock**

**F**ortunately, Nebraska did what it usually does. The Cornhuskers ran more often than not. Otherwise, they might still be playing Texas Tech at Jones SBC Stadium in Lubbock.

OK. That's an exaggeration. The game would have ended eventually, probably in the early-morning hours of Sunday if the Cornhuskers had thrown a lot.

"If we decide to go big into the passing game, it could take well into the night," Coach Frank Solich warned at his weekly news conference on Tuesday.

Solich's tongue-in-cheek warning was because of Texas Tech's penchant for passing. The Red Raiders will "throw 50 balls in this game, so it will be a long game," he said.

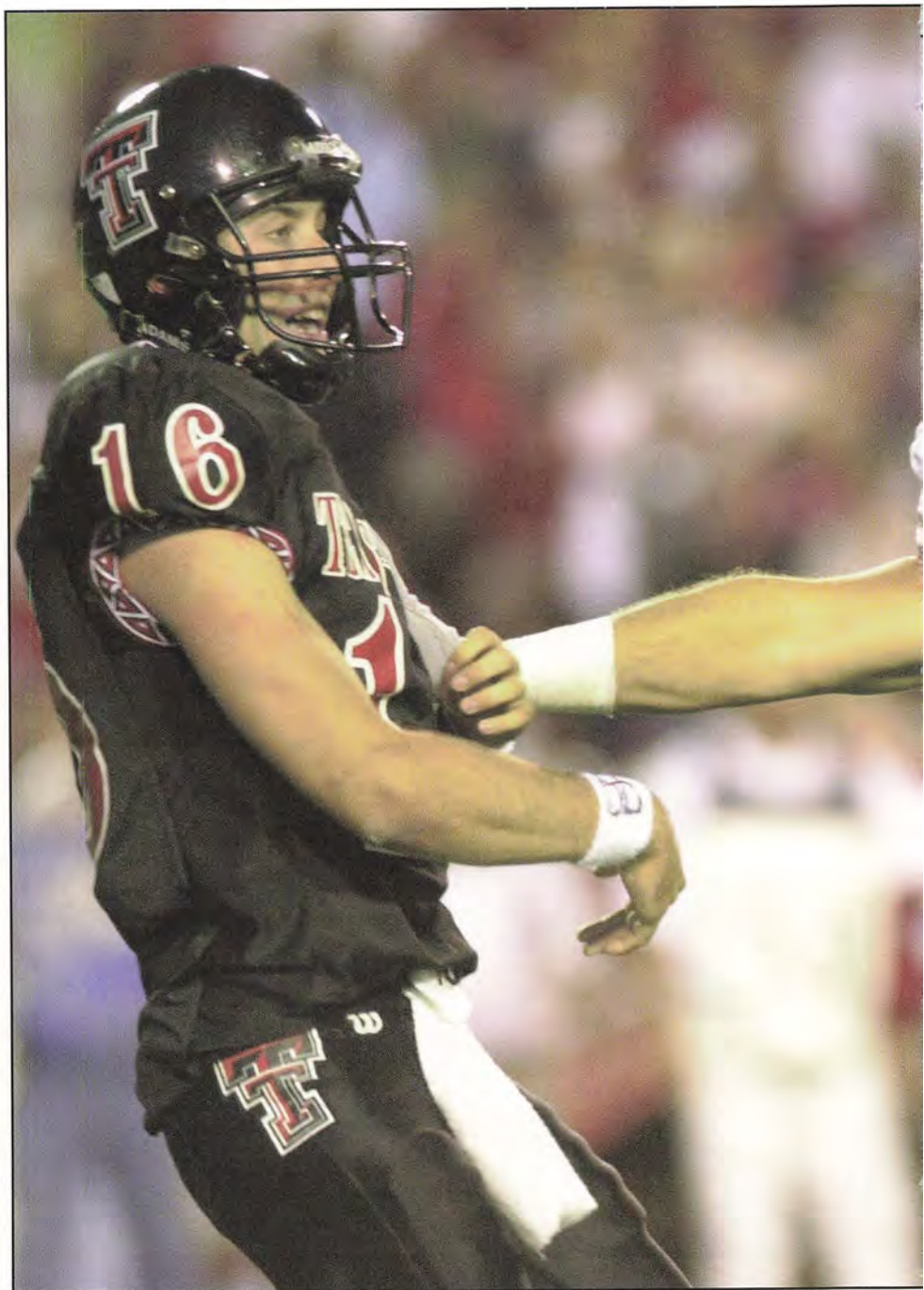
In fact, they threw 48 times in the 56-3 loss.

Nebraska threw only 14 passes, and just four during the second half. Solich decided to stay with the run because of "the way the linemen were coming off the ball," he said.

The Cornhuskers rushed for 442 yards and kept the clock running.

As a result, the game wasn't exceedingly long (3 hours, 17 minutes), except from a figurative standpoint for Texas Tech. The margin of defeat was the largest in school history.

That despite the fact the Red Raiders went into the game ranked second nationally in total defense



Nebraska rush end Justin Smith puts the heat on Texas Tech quarterback Kliff Kingsbury. The Blackshirts sacked Kingsbury three times and had two interceptions.

and fourth in scoring defense. They had allowed only 59 points total in six games.

Tech's statistical rankings motivated Nebraska's offensive line. "We wanted to show we could run up the

middle, that we could move the ball against the No. 2 defense in the nation," said center Dominic Raiola. "We didn't think it would be this easy. Maybe they just had a bad night."

# Game



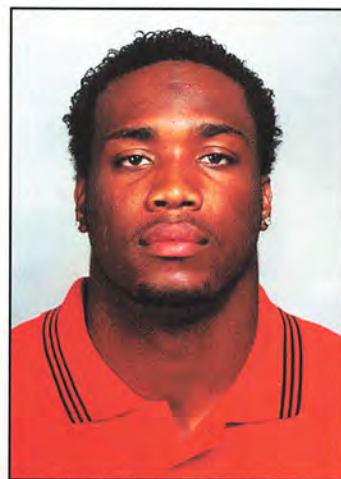
The Red Raiders did defensively. And Nebraska's line had a lot to do with it.

"It was a great game for the offensive line," tackle Jason Schwab said. "We came out fired up. When we do that, we're pretty potent. We love that smash-mouth football. We really got

after it."

Nebraska's defense also got after it, attacking the Red Raiders' passing game in such a way that the Tech faithful might have been hoping for some divine intervention in the form of the lightning that lit the area. It punctuated the second quarter like

## Husker Player of the Game



Joe Walker

### Walker's Third TD Ties Mark

Senior rover Joe Walker tied a school record by intercepting a pass and returning it 19 yards for Nebraska's first touchdown early in the first quarter. The interception return for a touchdown was the third of his career. He shares the record with Dave Mason, whose three career interception returns for touchdowns all came during the 1971 season.

"I think it was a big play for our defense," Walker said of his second interception this season. "I think it kind of gave our offense a little motivation to score themselves."

The way Walker and the defense played, however, his points were all the Cornhuskers needed.

"Joe's interception was really important," said defensive coordinator Craig Bohl.

Walker, who's from Arlington, Texas, was among six Texans included on Nebraska's travel roster. ■

**Photos by  
Joe Don Buckner,  
Lubbock  
Avalanche-Journal**

flashbulbs exploding in the gathering darkness, and continued less dramatically throughout the remainder of the game.

But the game went on.

And the crowd of 48,961, modest by Nebraska standards, dwindled.

The Cornhusker fans remained, of course. They wouldn't have gone that far to leave before the final gun. But the Tech fans left out of disinterest, no doubt, as much as anything.

Nebraska's sixth victory, and third in Big 12 play, was evidence that passing isn't necessarily the most entertaining form of offense, despite what some people seem to think.

Tech quarterback Kliff Kingsbury threw nearly as many passes as Nebraska's Eric Crouch has thrown in the last three games combined. And Kingsbury completed a good share of them. But the yardage was modest considering the number of attempts, two of which were intercepted.

For a time in the first half, the ball was like a hot potato in Kingsbury's hands.

And most importantly, all of the passes produced only three points.

Nebraska's defensive game plan was to make the Red Raiders' offense one-dimensional. And the Blackshirts succeeded. Tech rushed only 12 times, for a net of 19 yards, leaving the 6-foot-4, 200-pound Kingsbury at the mercy of a blitzing defense bent on his destruction.

The official statistics credited the Cornhuskers with two sacks. The Nebraska sports information office identified three. But whatever the number, Kingsbury was under constant pressure.

He started strong, completing his first three passes, the second of which was nullified by off-setting penalties. Then, on a first-and-10 at his own 47-yard line, Troy Watchorn intercepted him.

The Cornhuskers couldn't capitalize, despite taking possession on the Tech 27-yard line, because I-back Dan Alexander, the game's leading rusher, lost a fumble at the 16-yard line.

Kingsbury went right back to the air — the Red Raiders' first nine plays were passes, though Nebraska nose tackle Jason Lohr sacked him for a 7-yard loss on one of the nine. And again his throw was intercepted, this time by rover Joe Walker, who returned it 19 yards for a touchdown.

"That really sends a quarterback into a tailspin," defensive coordinator Craig Bohl said. "The thing you find in college is, if a quarterback gets



**Dan Alexander finds an opening in the Texas Tech defense. The senior I-back was Nebraska's leading rusher with 20 carries for 113 yards, the fourth time this season he has bettered the 100-yard mark.**

into a rhythm, it's going to be a hard night."

It was a hard night for Kingsbury, who never really got in a rhythm.

The Cornhuskers blitzed on Tech's first play from scrimmage, and though Kingsbury was able to complete a pass for an 11-yard gain, it sent an unmistakable message.

Blitzing in that situation is unconventional, but "they've got an unconventional offense," said Bohl. "I think we can become a good blitzing defense. We were pleased with the pressure we got.

"We've got to be predictably

unpredictable."

In contrast, Nebraska's offense was painfully predictable. From the beginning, "it looked like we were going to be able to move the ball on the ground, not get too exotic," Solich said.

The Cornhuskers' scoring had symmetry, 28 points in each half.

After fullback Willie Miller finished a 15-play, 80-yard drive with a 4-yard touchdown run that made the score 35-3, Solich was finally able to give quarterback Eric Crouch a rest.

"I think that's big," said Solich. "Eric's back started to tighten up on



# 4TH & 1 INCHES

*Notes And Quotes From The Texas Tech Game*

## **FOUR IN A ROW**

Senior free safety Troy Watchorn's interception on Texas Tech's first possession was his fourth in last four games. "It's a big thrill for me," said Watchorn, who was overly modest. "I've been fortunate."

The Nebraska sports information office is researching to determine if Watchorn's four interceptions in four consecutive games is a school record. The Cornhuskers' single-season record for interceptions is seven, shared by Larry Wacholtz (1966), Dana Stephenson (1969) and Bill Kosch (1970).

## **DON'T FORGET BAYLOR**

Texas Tech Coach Mike Leach was the offensive coordinator at Oklahoma last season, of course, so Tech's offense is similar to Oklahoma's. As a result, Nebraska should benefit from its preparations for the Red Raiders when it begins preparing to play at Oklahoma a week from now.

The Sooners upset Kansas State at Manhattan, Kan., 41-31.

"We hope that will have some carryover effect," said Coach Frank Solich. "It's not such that if you prepare for one, you prepare for the other. But there are similarities in some things they do."

"The ball's going to be in the air an awful lot with both of them. Both of them have very good receivers. Both of them also have the ability to run the football."

"So you hope that you prepare well for Texas Tech, and play well against them, and that leads to helping you prepare for Oklahoma and playing well against them also."

However, Solich cautioned, "we're jumping a little bit ahead of ourselves there."

Baylor is next up for the Cornhuskers, and the Bears' "style of offense is certainly different than what Oklahoma's and Texas Tech's are. The thing we can't do is start looking down the road," he said.

## **NEW BLACKSHIRTS THIS WEEK**

Watchorn and rush end Chris Kelsay wore Blackshirts in practice for the first time this season. Watchorn, a walk-on from Columbus, Neb., earned a black practice jersey for the first time ever, while Kelsay, a sophomore from Auburn, Neb., had a Blackshirt last season.

Kelsay got his first career start last week at Iowa State and played well against the Cyclones, "so we felt he certainly earned it," Solich said, noting that despite personal and injury problems, Kelsay "is doing a great job of concentrating on school and concentrating on football."

"That's what he needs to do. And that's what he's doing."

Watchorn shared first team on the depth chart with junior Dion Booker this week, allowing senior Clint Finley, who had been alternating at both safety positions, to focus on rover.

## **RADIO ONLY**

Nebraska's next game against Baylor in Lincoln will not be televised. There had been talk that the Fox Network might pick up the game for its late-morning slot. But that didn't happen.

Nebraska had considered putting the Baylor game on the HuskerVision screens in the Bob Devaney Sports Center, according to Athletic Director Bill Byrne. Because of its being a home game, however, there wouldn't have been sufficient staff beyond the needs of Memorial Stadium.

Nebraska showed the NBC telecast of the Cornhuskers' game at Notre Dame on the screens at the Devaney Sports Center and drew a disappointing 288, despite free admission.

"That was terrible, very discouraging," Byrne said, adding that plans are to try the Sports Center venue one more time. But it would have to be a road game because of the staffing problems.

## **MISSING FROM ACTION**

Loran Kaiser, who suffered a foot injury in the Missouri game, wasn't included on Nebraska's travel roster. The senior defensive tackle made the trip to Iowa State but didn't play.

Second-team split end Wilson Thomas and back-up rush end Benard Thomas also didn't make the trip to Lubbock, Wilson Thomas because of ankle injury, Benard Thomas because of illness. ■

him as the game went on. That will probably help him, not having to play the whole game."

Jammal Lord replaced Crouch, who scored two touchdowns and passed to wingback John Gibson for another, and directed a touchdown drive in each of his three series, completing the third himself with a 9-yard run. I-backs Correll Buckhalter and Dahrran Diedrick scored the other touchdowns.

"That was our most complete ball game of the year," Solich said.

But, he added, there was still room for improvement.

"The passing game wasn't quite where we want it," he said.

It didn't need to be on this particular night. ■

# 2000 Schedule

(Team's current record)

1	Sept. 2	San Jose State (4-3), W 49-13
2	Sept. 9	at Notre Dame (4-2), W 27-24
3	Sept. 23	Iowa (1-6), W 42-13
4	Sept. 30	Missouri (2-4), W 42-24
5	Oct. 7	at Iowa State (5-1), W 49-27
6	Oct. 14	at Texas Tech (5-2), W 56-3
7	Oct. 21	Baylor (2-4), 12:30 p.m.
8	Oct. 28	at Oklahoma (6-0), TBA
9	Nov. 4	Kansas (3-3), TBA, Homecoming
10	Nov. 11	at Kansas State (6-1), TBA
11	Nov. 24	Colorado (1-5), 11 a.m., ABC
	Dec. 2	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, ABC

## Big 12 Standings

	North		All	
	Conf.			
Nebraska	3	0	6	0
Kansas State	2	1	6	1
Iowa State	2	1	5	1
Kansas	1	2	3	3
Missouri	1	2	2	4
Colorado	1	2	1	5

	South		All	
	Conf.			
Oklahoma	3	0	6	0
Texas	2	1	4	2
Texas A&M	2	1	4	2
Texas Tech	1	2	5	2
Baylor	0	3	2	4
Oklahoma State	0	3	2	4

### Oct. 14 results

Nebraska 56, Texas Tech 3  
Oklahoma 41, Kansas State 31  
Kansas 38, Missouri 17  
Texas 28, Colorado 14  
Texas A&M 24, Baylor 0  
Iowa State 33, Oklahoma State 26

### Nonconference opponents

Notre Dame 45, Navy 14  
Illinois 31, Iowa 0  
UTEP 47, San Jose State 30

## Upcoming Opponents' Schedules

### Baylor (2-4)

at North Texas, W 20-7  
Minnesota, L 34-9  
South Florida, W 26-13  
Iowa State, L 31-17  
at Texas Tech, L 28-0  
Texas A&M, L 24-0  
at Nebraska  
at Texas  
Oklahoma  
Missouri  
at Oklahoma State

### Oklahoma (6-0)

Texas-El Paso, W 55-14  
Arkansas State, W 45-7  
Rice, W 42-14  
Kansas, W 34-16  
at Texas (Dallas), W 63-14  
at Kansas State, W 41-31  
Nebraska  
at Baylor  
at Texas A&M  
Texas Tech  
at Oklahoma State

## Game 7

**Baylor**  
**Oct. 21**

**Location:** Waco, Texas

**Enrollment:** 13,334

**1999 record:** 1-10

**Coach:** Kevin Steele, second year

**Series:** Nebraska leads 5-1



**12:30 p.m. (No TV)**

**Memorial Stadium, Lincoln**

## Bear to Watch

**With 50 yards against Texas Tech on Oct. 7,** senior tailback Darrell Bush became the sixth player in Baylor history to reach the 2,000-yard mark in career rushing yardage.



Bush, who was limited to 25 yards by Texas A&M, is Baylor's No. 6 career rusher with 2,043 yards. He needs 18 yards to pass David Mims for fifth place on the Baylor rushing charts.

## Quick Facts

**Baylor suffered its second straight shutout** in a 24-0 loss to Texas A&M and has not scored since the second half of a 31-17 loss to Iowa State on Sept. 30.

**The Bears have a definite Nebraska influence** on their coaching staff. Head coach Kevin Steele was linebacker coach at Nebraska from 1989-1994, and former Nebraska All-America quarterback Tommie Frazier is in his second year as running back coach.

**Starting weakside linebacker Anthony Simmons,** who was tied for second on the team in tackles, has been suspended for two games for disciplinary reasons.

**Baylor lists 24 freshmen and sophomores** among the top 44 players on its depth chart, the most of any Big 12 team.

## On Deck

**At Oklahoma**  
**Oct. 28**

**Location:** Norman, Okla.

**Enrollment:** 25,000

**1999 record:** 7-5

**Coach:** Bob Stoops, second year

**Series:** Oklahoma leads 39-36-3

**Time, TV TBA**

**Memorial Stadium, Norman, Okla.**



# Tentative 2 Deeps

## NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	3	Matt Davison***	6-1	185	Sr.
	9	Wilson Thomas*	6-5	205	So.
LT	58	Dave Volk**	6-5	290	Jr.
	66	Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	77	Toniui Fonoti*	6-4	335	So.
	50	Jon Dawson	6-2	280	Fr.
C	54	Dominic Raiola**	6-2	300	Jr.
	66	Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
RG	55	Russ Hochstein***	6-4	290	Sr.
	50	Jon Dawson	6-2	280	Fr.
RT	65	Jason Schwab**	6-1	305	Sr.
	66	Jon Rutherford**	6-3	300	Jr.
TE	87	Tracey Wistrom**	6-5	230	Jr.
	99	Aaron Golliday*	6-4	285	So.
QB	7	Eric Crouch**	6-1	200	Jr.
	10	Jammal Lord	6-2	210	Fr.
FB	15	Willie Miller***	6-1	245	Sr.
	4	Judd Davies	6-0	240	Fr.
IB	38	Dan Alexander***	6-0	245	Sr.
and	36	Correll Buckhalter***	6-0	225	Sr.
WB	12	Bobby Newcombe***	6-0	200	Sr.
	8	John Gibson**	6-0	195	Sr.
PK	26	Josh Brown*	6-2	190	So.

## NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LR	57	Chris Kelsay*	6-5	255	So.
or	98	Demoine Adams*	6-2	235	So.
NT	70	Jason Lohr*	6-2	275	Jr.
	85	Casey Nelson*	6-1	285	Jr.
DT	91	Loran Kaiser***	6-4	290	Sr.
	56	Jeremy Slechta**	6-6	285	Jr.
RR	83	Kyle Vanden Bosch**	6-4	260	Sr.
	95	J.P. Wichmann*	6-4	230	Jr.
SLB	43	Scott Shanle*	6-2	230	So.
	41	Rod Baker*	6-0	225	Sr.
MLB	13	Carlos Polk***	6-2	260	Sr.
	48	Jamie Burrow**	6-1	225	Jr.
WLB	34	Randy Stella*	6-0	200	Jr.
	9	Mark Vedral**	6-1	205	Jr.
LCB	3	Keyuo Craver**	5-10	190	Jr.
	28	Pat Ricketts	5-11	180	Fr.
FS	14	Dion Booker**	6-1	205	Jr.
	42	Troy Watchorn**	5-11	195	Sr.
ROV	25	Joe Walker***	5-10	205	Sr.
or	19	Clint Finley***	6-0	205	Sr.
RCB	16	Erwin Swiney**	6-0	185	Jr.
or	5	DeJuan Groce*	5-10	190	So.
P	17	Dan Hadenfeldt*	5-11	195	Sr.

## BAYLOR OFFENSE

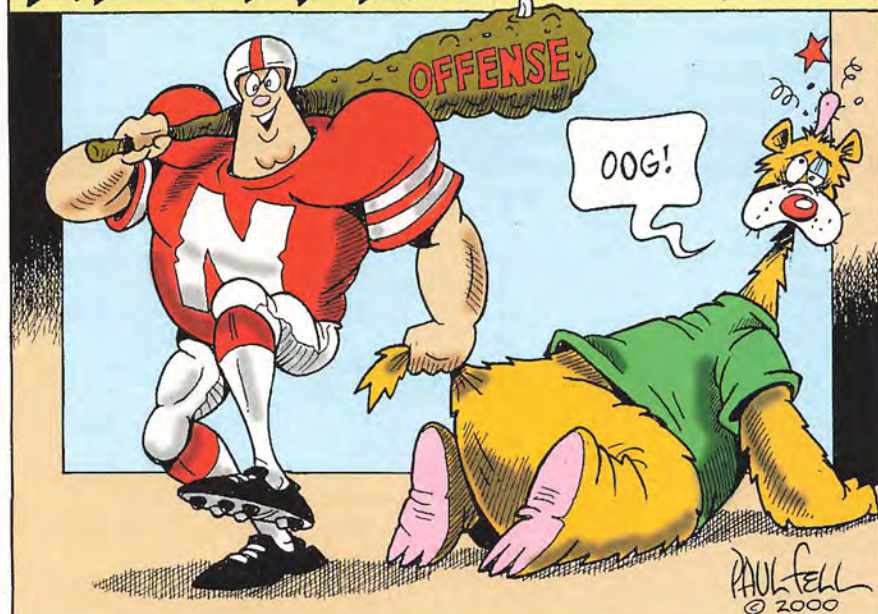
SE	81	Reggie Newhouse*	6-1	196	So.
	82	Robert Quiroga	6-2	194	Fr.
LT	59	Ethan Kelley*	6-2	312	So.
	67	David Armstrong	6-4	284	Jr.
LG	52	Greg Jerman**	6-5	281	Jr.
	62	Derrick Pearcy	6-3	321	So.
C	50	Joe Jackson**	6-2	281	Jr.
	56	Eric South	6-4	271	Fr.
RG	76	Cedric Fields	6-3	312	Fr.
	75	Everett Fraser	6-5	300	So.
RT	71	Jon Erickson	6-5	298	Jr.
	66	Chad Crady*	6-4	279	So.
TE	89	Andrew Obriotti**	6-3	231	Jr.
	83	Anthony Dozier	6-4	252	Jr.
QB	14	Guy Tomcheck	6-3	225	Fr.
or	17	Kerry Dixon	6-0	174	Fr.
TB	6	Darrell Bush***	5-9	195	Sr.
	48	Jonathan Golden	6-0	205	Fr.
FB	31	Melvin Barnett**	6-0	254	Jr.
	32	Jimmy Dalton*	6-2	264	So.
FL	1	Andra Fuller**	5-10	181	Jr.
	19	Martin Dossett***	5-11	189	Sr.
PK	34	Daniel Andino	5-11	221	So.

## BAYLOR DEFENSE

LE	60	Charles Mann*	6-4	251	So.
	51	Eric Clay***	6-1	240	Sr.
NT	95	Ryan Gillenwater**	6-0	281	Jr.
	78	Travis Hicks*	6-3	302	So.
DT	99	Kevin Stevenson*	6-2	284	So.
	65	Demetrio Phillips	6-4	280	Jr.
RE	90	Aaron Lard	6-1	256	Fr.
	94	Joe Simmons	6-4	233	Fr.
SLB	12	McKinley Bowie***	6-1	237	Sr.
	33	Derrick Cash	5-11	205	Fr.
MLB	45	Kris Micheaux***	6-1	272	Sr.
	36	Jason Lary***	6-0	219	Sr.
WLB	7	John Garrett	6-1	219	Fr.
	42	Stephen Sepulveda	6-1	207	Fr.
LCB	2	Daniel Wilturner**	5-8	173	Fr.
	21	Eric Giddens	6-0	184	Fr.
SS	16	Samir Al-Amin**	6-0	213	Jr.
	35	Kyle Staudt	6-3	210	Jr.
FS	40	Matt Amendola	5-11	194	Fr.
	5	Odell James***	6-3	221	Sr.
RCB	18	Gary Baxter***	6-2	203	Sr.
	38	Bobby Hart	5-11	178	Fr.
P	13	Adam Stiles	6-4	207	Jr.

# THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

## NEBRASKA vs. BAYLOR



OCT. 21, 2000

HUSKERS HEED ADVICE THAT YOU DON'T GO HUNTING BEARS WITH A SWITCH!

# PICKS

## BAYLOR AT NEBRASKA

### Brian Hill Editor

Baylor is young and inexperienced. Its top two quarterbacks are a redshirt freshman and a true freshman. The game is in Lincoln. That's only part of the bad news for the Bears. The good news is that Nebraska could be looking ahead to the Oklahoma game the following week, and that's about all. **Nebraska 59, Baylor 10**

### Mike Babcock Contributing Editor

Former Cornhusker assistant Kevin Steele's first visit to Memorial Stadium as head coach at Baylor, with former Husker quarterback Tommie Frazier among his assistants, doesn't figure to be much of a homecoming. **Nebraska 63, Baylor 14**

### Bob Schaller Contributing Writer

This is Baylor. With its starting quarterback gone, the Bears are less than a passing threat. This will be ugly, but the Husker faithful will get their wish to see some of the top backups — and probably early. Frank Solich doesn't want to hang 60 on Kevin Steele. But it will happen. **Nebraska 66, Baylor 13**

### Terry Douglass Grand Island (Neb.) Independent Sports Editor

Baylor Coach Kevin Steele, a Husker assistant under Tom Osborne, says he still has a lot of fond memories of Lincoln. This won't be one of them. NU will dominate in every facet of the game, as it prepares for the showdown with Oklahoma. **Nebraska 63, Baylor 7**

# BY THE NUMBERS

**Nebraska vs. Texas Tech**  
Oct. 14, 2000 • Jones Stadium • Lubbock, Texas

## Score By Quarters

<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Texas Tech</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>3</b>

## Team Stats

	<b>NU</b>	<b>TT</b>
First Downs	30	11
Rushing	25	1
Passing	4	9
Penalty	1	1
Rushing Attempts	77	12
Yards Gained Rushing	454	40
Yards Lost Rushing	13	21
Net Yards Rushing	442	19
Net Yards Passing	98	181
Passes Attempted	14	48
Passes Completed	7	22
Had Intercepted	1	2
Total Plays	91	60
Total Net Yards	540	200
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.9	3.3
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	9-68	12-83
Punts-Yards	2-91	8-272
Avg. Per Punt	45.5	34.0
Punt Returns-Yards	4-20	1-9
Interceptions-Yards	2-35	1-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	0-0	6-108
Possession Time	37:48	22:12

## Scoring

**NU** — Joe Walker 19-yard interception return (Josh Brown kick)  
**NU** — Eric Crouch 3-yard run (Brown kick)  
**NU** — John Gibson 8-yard pass from Crouch (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Crouch 1-yard run (Brown kick)  
**TT** — Chris Birkholz 41-yard field goal  
**NU** — Willie Miller 4-yard run (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Correll Buckhalter 3-yard run (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Dahrnan Diedrick 4-yard run (Brown kick)  
**NU** — Jammal Lord 9-yard run (Brown kick)  
**Att.** — 48,961  
**Temp.** — 73



Nebraska quarterback Eric Crouch rushed for 52 yards and two touchdowns.

## 2000 SEASON STATS

### RUSHING

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Alexander, D.	6	110	676	112.7	4
Crouch, E.	6	91	530	88.3	10
Buckhalter, C.	6	67	479	79.8	4
Miller, W.	6	30	141	23.5	2
Diedrick, D.	6	16	110	18.3	2
Davies, J.	6	11	98	16.3	0
Lord, J.	4	12	66	16.5	2
Grixby, D.	6	8	56	9.3	0
Newcombe, B.	6	7	16	2.7	0
Miller, R.	2	2	10	5.0	0
Chrisman, J.	2	2	10	5.0	0
Kastl, P.	1	2	4	4.0	0
Davis, J.	2	1	3	1.5	0
Collins, T.	1	2	2	2.0	0

### PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	6	45-90-5	50.0	752	9
Lord, J.	4	2-5-1	40.0	36	0

### RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Wistrom, T.	6	14	247	17.6	41.2	4
Davison, M.	6	12	228	19.0	38.0	2
Newcombe, B.	6	10	166	16.6	27.7	0
Buckhalter, C.	6	3	68	22.6	11.3	1
Bowling, J.	6	2	25	12.5	4.2	1
Davies, J.	6	2	22	11.0	3.7	0
Alexander, D.	6	2	17	8.5	2.8	0
Gibson, J.	6	1	8	8.0	1.3	1
Golliday, A.	6	1	7	7.0	1.2	0

### FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, J.	6	5	2	40

### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	21	906	43.1	55
Brown, J.	1	28	28.0	28

### DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Polk, C.	6	18	24	42	2-14	0	1-10
Stella, R.	6	20	11	31	7-22	0	2.5-14
Craver, K.	6	16	11	27	3-12	0	1-9
Shanley, S.	6	14	12	26	1-1	1-18	0
Walker, J.	6	15	9	24	1-1	2-24	0
Vanden Bosch, K.	6	15	9	24	6-32	0	2-14
Booker, D.	6	14	8	22	0	0	0
Lohr, J.	6	9	11	20	3-10	0	1-7
Slechta, J.	6	7	9	16	2-7	0	1-7
Kaiser, L.	4	5	10	15	0	0	0

### TEAM STATISTICS

Total Offensive Yards	2,987	1,944				
Plays	455	390				
Average Per Play	6.6	5.0				
Average Per Game	497.8	324.0				
Net Rushing Yards	2,199	689				
Attempts	360	168				
TDs Rushing	24	4				
Net Passing Yards	788	1,255				
Completions	47	99				
Average Per Pass	8.3	5.7				
Average Per Catch	16.8	12.7				
Average Per Game	131.3	209.2				
TDs Passing	9	6				
Sacks By-Yards	12-81	7-52				
Fumbles-Lost	8-2	7-1				
Penalties-Yards	36-289	56-436				
<b>Scoring</b>	<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>OT</b>	<b>TOT</b>
NU	49	83	50	77	6	265
Opponents	27	27	33	14	3	104

## Individual Leaders

### NEBRASKA

#### RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Alexander, D.	20	113	5.7	14	0
Buckhalter, C.	13	105	8.1	21	1
Diedrick, D.	7	53	7.6	17	1
Crouch, E.	12	52	4.3	40	2
Grixby, D.	7	47	6.7	10	0
Lord, J.	7	33	4.7	11	1
Miller, W.	5	18	3.6	7	1
Chrisman, J.	1	8	8.0	8	0
Newcombe, B.	2	8	4.0	8	0
Kastl, P.	2	4	2.0	3	0
Davies, J.	1	1	1.0	1	0

#### PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	6-12-1	50.0	86	1
Lord, J.	1-2-0	50.0	12	0

#### RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Davison, M.	2	37	18.5	29	0
Newcombe, B.	2	32	16.0	20	0
Alexander, D.	1	14	14.0	14	0
Gibson, J.	1	8	8.0	8	1
Davies, J.	1	7	7.0	7	0

#### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	2	91	45.5	55

#### PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Cornelson, B.	1	11	11.0	11	0
Walker, J.	3	9	3.0	5	0

#### DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
(Editor's Note: Texas Tech's postgame statistics showed 0 assisted tackles for Nebraska players)						
Craver, K.	5	0	5	2-3	0	0
Stella, R.	5	0	5	1-4	0	1-4
Lohr, J.	3	0	3	1-7	0	1-7
Booker, D.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Ricketts, P.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Polk, C.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Vedrai, M.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Wichmann, J.P.	2	0	2	1-8	0	1-8
Vanden Bosch, K.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Penny, J.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Adams, D.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Walker, J.	1	0	1	0	1-19	0
Watchorn, T.	1	0	1	0	1-16	0
Smith, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Swiney, E.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Diedrick, D.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Long, C.	1	0	1	0	0	0

### TEXAS TECH

#### RUSHING

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Symons, B.J.	1	15	15.0	15	0
Williams, S.	4	8	2.0	4	0
Williams, R.	2	5	2.5	4	0
Kingsbury, K.	6	-9	-1.8	9	0

#### PASSING

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Kingsbury, K.	20-37-2	54.1	165	0
Symons, B.J.	2-11-0	18.2	16	0

#### RECEIVING

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Welker, W.	3	56	18.7	31	0
Baker, T.	3	40	13.3	15	0
Dorris, D.	4	39	9.8	24	0
Williams, R.	4	13	3.3	11	0
Francis, C.	1	12	12.0	12	0
Williams, S.	3	11	3.7	13	0
Jones, D.	3	11	3.7	7	0
Easterling, J.	1	-1	-1.0	0	0

#### PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Greathouse, C.	8	272	34.0	53

#### PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Welker, W.	1	9	9.0	9	0

#### KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Welker, W.	6	108	18.0	28	0

#### DEFENSE

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Curtis, K.	10	3	13	1-2	0	0
Flugence, L.	11	0	11	1-1	0	0
Lemons, D.	8	1	9	0	0	0
Pitts, D.	5	2	7	0	0	0
Washington, M.	6	0	6	0	0	0
McClendon, P.	5	0	5	0	0	0
Shain, T.	4	0	4	0	0	0
McCoy, Z.	4	0	4	0	0	0
Hunt, A.	3	1	4	1-1	0	0
Norman, J.	2	2	4	0	1-0	0
Kocurek, K.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Bucy, R.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Briggs, D.	3	0	3	0	0	0
Wyatt, R.	3	0	3	1-5	0	0
Alexander, A.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Aycock, R.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Dorris, D.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Terrell, A.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Page, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0

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# Words Stung



***Lineman  
McGhee stayed  
at Nebraska  
because of his  
respect for  
Devaney***

***By Mike Babcock***

**T**he incident occurred when Donnie McGhee was a sophomore, or maybe even a junior. More than 30 years have passed, and the particulars of that unpleasant memory have faded.

McGhee had just returned to Nebraska from his home in Flint, Mich.

"Hey, McGhee, I told you to come back looking like a greyhound, and you look like a Mack Truck," Nebraska football coach Bob Devaney said when he saw the big offensive lineman.

Devaney's words stung McGhee's pride. "I thought I was doing pretty good," he said, recalling the encounter.

He remembers thinking, "I'm not going to take this. I'm going home."

When McGhee came to Nebraska as a freshman in August of 1966, he weighed 305 pounds. By Thanksgiving of that first year, through hard work, he had dropped down to 250.

But slowly the weight had come back. And Devaney, a "no nonsense" coach, was displeased.

McGhee's initial reaction quickly gave way to determination. Bob

Donnie McGhee was an All-Big Eight guard in 1970. He was one of seven players from Michigan who earned letters that season.

## Game 6 Nebraska 41, Kansas 20

Oct. 17, 1970

Memorial Stadium, Lawrence, Kan.

### (First Quarter)

	Score	Time
<b>NU</b> — Dan Schneiss, 2-yd run (Paul Rogers kick)	7-0	13:18
<b>NU</b> — Rogers, 28-yd field goal	10-0	1:22
<b>KU</b> — Vince O'Neill, 96-yd kickoff return (kick failed)	10-6	1:09

### (Second Quarter)

<b>KU</b> — John Riggins, 2-yd run (Bob Helmbacker kick)	10-13	13:23
<b>KU</b> — Dan Heck, 1-yd run (Helmbacker kick)	10-20	9:28
<b>NU</b> — Guy Ingles, 80-yd pass from Van Brownson (Rogers kick)	17-20	9:17
<b>NU</b> — Brownson, 15-yd run (Rogers kick)	24-20	3:23

### (Third Quarter)

<b>NU</b> — Johnny Rodgers, 5-yd pass from Brownson (Rogers kick)	31-20	3:08
---	-------	------

### (Fourth Quarter)

<b>NU</b> — Brownson, 2-yd run (Rogers kick)	38-20	13:22
<b>NU</b> — Rogers, 32-yd field goal	41-20	8:40

## The First

Sixth in a Series

# 1

Thirty years have passed since Nebraska won its first official national title. And during those 30 years, Nebraska has finished atop the national rankings four more times, including three from 1994 to 1997. As the 1970 season illustrates, championships can depend on luck as well as on preparation and design. In a 12-part series, Huskers Illustrated takes a game-by-game look at the 1970 season.

Liggett, a defensive tackle and friend, helped convince him to stay. And the two began playing racquetball to trim down.

"I realized the man was telling me for my own good," said McGhee, who decided to stay at Nebraska because of his respect for Devaney, "not wanting to let him down."



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That wasn't the only factor, however. "I could have been stuck in Flint," he said.

For him, Cornhusker football was a way to get out of his hometown, figuratively as well as literally, an opportunity to do something other than work in the General Motors plants that were the economic lifeblood of industrialized cities in Michigan's Saginaw Valley.

His father spent 34 years with GM. "I didn't want to do that," McGhee said.

Nebraska offered him a way out. The youngest of four brothers, he would be the first in his family to attend college. So when Cornhusker assistant Mike Corgan came calling, he listened.

"It piqued my interest," he said. "I viewed it as an adventure."

That the Cornhuskers would recruit the Saginaw Valley area under Devaney should come as no surprise. He had been an assistant to Duffy Daugherty at Michigan State before becoming the head coach at Wyoming, a job he held for five years before coming to Nebraska in 1962. And he had begun his coaching career at the high school level in Michigan, after graduating from Alma, Mich., College.

Devaney grew up in Saginaw and shared McGhee's background. He spent three years working in a Chevrolet iron foundry after graduating high school before enrolling at Alma College. "I figured there must be something better to life than that," Devaney wrote in his 1981 autobiography.

McGhee felt the same way when he accepted Nebraska's scholarship offer.

He and Terry Harris, a teammate at Northwestern High in Flint who also had a scholarship, came to Nebraska together. "We had no idea what we were getting into," said McGhee.

"Probably anyone who landed on campus was in awe of the program."

And he and Harris were no exceptions. "It was kind of a shock," McGhee said. "There were 13 GM plants in and around the city of Flint. Lincoln was a breath of fresh air." Literally.

Even so, Harris didn't stay beyond his freshman season. But McGhee did.

In some ways, his experience was different from that of most of his teammates. He was married and had a daughter, whom "a lot of the players knew and kind of adopted," he said.

He and his wife Ruby lived in a duplex at the Lincoln Airpark. But he

never felt excluded. The 1970 national championship team "wasn't segmented," he said. It had a unity that crossed racial lines.

He socialized with teammates, black and white, and went pheasant hunting with a group that included middle guard Ed Periard and fullback Dan Schneiss, both seniors in 1970.

They would get up early Sunday morning and run before going hunting.

Periard, who was from Birch Run, and McGhee were among seven players from Michigan who earned letters on the 1970 team. The others were tight end Jerry List (Bay City), split end Woody Cox (Grosse Pointe), defensive tackle Dave Walline (Ypsilanti), cornerback John Decker (Saginaw) and defensive end John Pitts (Flint). Cox was a junior college transfer.

McGhee played on the freshman team then redshirted. The redshirt season was a "Godsend," he said. "You look at a four-year college education, it's difficult to get a degree in four years."

Even though he earned all-conference recognition as a guard in 1970, McGhee wasn't selected in the NFL draft. But he had his degree in elementary education, and a teaching job in Flint.

He spent just one year as an elementary school teacher, however.

"I wasn't content, so in the summer of 1972, I was looking around," he said.

What he found was a job as a counselor in the office of admissions and records at the GM Institute engineering college. His focus was recruiting female and minority engineers.

He left GM and went to work for Honda in 1988, moving to jobs in various facilities. He is now a senior staff administrator for manufacturing in Marysville, Ohio.

Ruby works as a nurse in Dayton. And they are grandparents, twice.

Though it's been a long time since he visited Nebraska, McGhee has a satellite dish and watches the Cornhuskers on television. And occasionally he'll wear a Nebraska national championship cap to the office, just to aggravate the Ohio State fans with whom he works.

Playing football at Nebraska was a means to an end for him. If he hadn't accepted the scholarship from the Cornhuskers, "I'd hate to see where I'd be today," McGhee said.

"We cherished that opportunity a lot more than kids today. I know I did." ■



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# Leadership Changes; Goals Still the Same

*Observers note subtle differences between Cook, predecessor Pettit*

**By Todd Henrichs**

**W**hen Terry Pettit handed over the keys to the Nebraska volleyball program last December, very little change was expected.

After all, John Cook was Pettit's handpicked successor. They had been close friends since Cook came to Nebraska as an assistant coach in 1988.

They coached together again last season in what amounted to a transition year for the NU program.

Midway through Cook's first season at Nebraska, subtle differences between the two coaches and their philosophies have become apparent.

But one thing hasn't changed. Nebraska remains a contender for the national championship.

"The goals are still the same," Cook said.

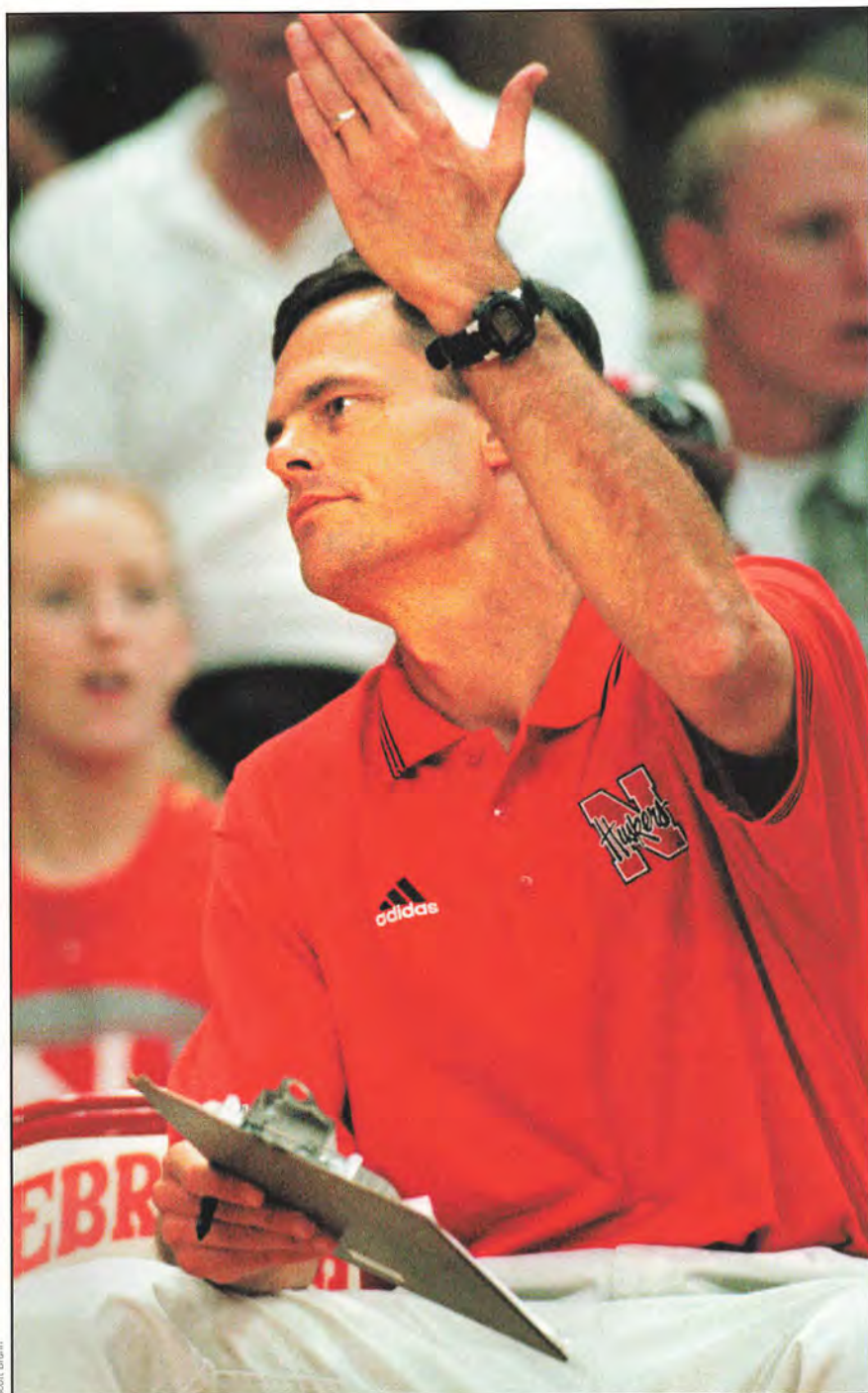
Under the new coaching staff, serving and defense are now as big an emphasis as the Final Four itself. Nebraska is a stronger serving team in 2000. Defensively, more is expected from the Huskers this season.

Opposing coaches have taken note.

"Terry Pettit obviously is one of the great collegiate coaches of all time," Kansas Coach Ray Bechard said after his Jayhawks were swept at home by NU. "But any time you bring a new staff in, I think there is a renewed look at how you approach things.

"I think John has just done a great job creating not a new attitude but just a new environment, a new mind-set."

It's not a stretch to say Nebraska's



The Nebraska volleyball team hasn't missed a beat under first-year head coach John Cook. After sweeping Iowa State on Oct. 8, the No. 1-rated Huskers were 15-0.

new coach is detail-oriented, someone who has his hands in everything from the team's starting lineup to running lines after practice.

It's a contrast to Pettit, who is best described as a "visionary" and a "big-picture person."

Naturally, Pettit looked to the future in seeking Cook as his successor. Like Pettit, Cook has a tremendous passion for the game and shares his feverish work ethic.

"It's the reason John is here," Pettit said. "Every day, you have to have the passion and energy to go in and challenge the players. I was convinced he would do that."

The scale is smaller, but the coaching transition is being watched just as (Tom) Osborne to (Frank) Solich was analyzed two years ago. Unlike football, where the changes were minimal and the staff returned virtually intact, this truly is a new era for Nebraska volleyball.

Many of the players are the same, but off the court, virtually everything has changed. The program has two new assistant coaches, a new administrator, trainer and sports information director in charge of media relations.

And before coaching his first match, Cook took the team on a 2 1/2-week tour of China he coordinated from day

one.

"I felt like this is the hardest I have had to work," Cook said. "I've had to make the greatest sacrifices."

"But I just had to suck it up and do what it takes."

Cook asks for that same determination from his players, yet in just about any practice you'll see him slapping high-fives. Music accompanies the workouts.

"Cook and Pettit are basically night and day," senior Angie Oxley said. "Cook is very social. He's real outgoing."

Like Pettit, Cook watches hour after hour of videotape. Former Husker Christy Johnson found other similarities upon joining Cook's coaching staff at Wisconsin.

"But for as many coaches as there are in the world, there are as many different coaching styles," Johnson said. "John's just suits him."

The two coaches still talk every day. Pettit isn't seen at practice much, but he has gone over film in an attempt to pick out any weaknesses on Nebraska's team.

Now an athletic administrator at NU, Pettit says he's missed only certain aspects of his former job.

"It's been a lot less difficult than you might think," Pettit said. "The fact

that I'm not sitting on the bench doesn't cause me any palpitations at all. I can enjoy it from 15 rows up."

Who wouldn't enjoy Nebraska's impressive start under Cook. After their sweep of Iowa State on Oct. 8, the Huskers were 15-0 and ranked first in the USA Today / AVCA coaches poll.

Those are impressive numbers even for a program that in 23 seasons under Pettit won a national championship, 21 conference titles and made 18 straight NCAA tournament appearances.

Cook promises to take the program to greater heights. That's not to include only wins, but bigger goals, such as the team's trip to China. He aims to someday bring a Final Four to the fans of Nebraska, just as he did for Wisconsin in 1998.

The Badgers very nearly won the right to play for the national title at home that season but lost in a heart-wrenching fifth game to Nebraska. Within two months he made the decision to leave for Lincoln.

There is no looking back, except to draw inspiration.

"I've been in two fifth games to go to the Final Four," Cook said. "That's what gives me the energy to go hard every day."

"That, and I don't want to let down Coach Pettit." ■

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# Defensive Anchors

## Interior linemen aren't forgotten in Husker system

By James Hale

**T**here is so much made about Nebraska's speed and attacking style of defense that we sometimes forget that without the anchor in the middle, all the speed guys would come up empty-handed.

We tend to forget about the guys in the trenches, but Nebraska is one school that is recognized for its outstanding play in the trenches on both sides of the ball.

The exploits of Jason Lohr, Loran Kaiser, Jeremy Slechta, Casey Nelson and Jon Clanton are well chronicled and appreciated by Nebraska football coaches and fans. They realize that if the defensive tackles cause havoc and control the middle, then the rest of the defense can dominate.

Nebraska continues to look for players to man the defensive interior, and the Cornhuskers are very much in the running for the played considered the No. 1 defensive tackle in the country.

Tommie Harris (6-foot-4 and 278 pounds, with 4.7-second speed in the 40-yard dash) of Killeen (Ellison), Texas, is the type of franchise defensive tackle all college programs dream of having. Defensive tackles who can run like a sprinter don't come along very often. Blessed with a personal best 4.67 40 time Harris admits that speed is a major part of his game.

"I have always been able to run



Defensive tackle Jared Helming of Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo., committed early to Nebraska.

with just about everybody on the field," Harris said. "Of course, as I have gotten older and bigger, some of the skill guys can now outrun me, but when I was growing up, I was always one of the fastest guys on the team. Now, I am fast enough to chase down quarterbacks, and by taking the right angles I can catch some running backs, too.

"I think I am more quick than anything now, as I can blow by my opponent and get to the quarterback or running back before they can make the handoff. My first step off the ball is a great weapon for me now."

Harris is a 3-year starter at defensive tackle for one of the top high school programs in Texas. Last year,

Harris finished with 139 stops, 26 tackles for loss, 81 solo stops and five sacks. A thigh injury has limited Harris to just 2 1/4 games thus far, but he still has 27 tackles to his credit, and an incredible 21 of those have been for losses.

Not only is Harris quick, but he can bench press 425 pounds and squat 550, and he has a 36-inch vertical jump.

"Actually, at the line of scrimmage, I use my strength and leverage more than anything," Harris said. "My first step gets me into a position where I can overpower my opponent, and then it is a matter of finding the ball."

Recruiting has been nonstop for Harris since the summer, and he is trying to get his list down to five. That hasn't been easy.

"I have set visits with Florida State, Texas A&M, Miami and Texas," Harris said. "I am working on setting a date with Nebraska right now, and I am probably going to take an unofficial visit to Oklahoma."

Harris said he really likes Nebraska's style of defense.

"Out of all the teams that I am considering, Nebraska has the most impressive defense for me," Harris said. "Their defensive tackles aren't holding up offensive linemen, so the linebackers can make the tackles. They are being aggressive and getting upfield to make plays themselves.

"It's important that I play in a defense that attacks. I want a great defensive line coach, and I want to play for a guy who is going to care for me as a person. I want him to care how my grades are doing and how things are going with me personally. I don't have a favorite right now."

Thomas Derricks (6-0 1/2, 290, 4.88) of Dallas (Jesuit) is a bowling ball-type of defensive tackle who always seems to be rolling downhill toward the running back.

Rated as a top 10 defensive tackle, Thomas racked up 98 tackles, four sacks and four fumble recoveries a year ago. Derricks is on pace to get more than 100 tackles this year, and he has already taken his first official visit.

"Penn State was an incredible place for me to visit," Derricks said. "I just liked everything about it, from Coach (Joe) Paterno, the players, coaches, fans and campus. There is no

### Nebraska Commitments for 2001

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Seppo Ewvaraye	Laurel (Laurel-Concord), Neb.	6-5	323	OL/DL
Jared Helming	Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo.	6-4	270	DT
Richie Incognito	Glendale (Mountain View), Ariz.	6-4	285	OL
Mike McLaughlin	Omaha (Millard North), Neb.	6-1	175	QB
Gary Pike	Pueblo (Centennial), Colo.	6-5	275	OL
Cory Ross	Denver (Thomas Jefferson), Colo.	5-9	182	DB/WR
Barrett Ruud	Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.	6-2	220	LB
Dan Stevenson	Barrington, Ill.	6-6	305	OL
Mike Stuntz	Council Bluffs (St. Albert), Iowa	6-2	180	QB

question that Penn State would be a great place to play football.

"I am going to visit Notre Dame and Duke, and I am still looking at a number of schools for my final two visits. I am still talking to UCLA, Boston College, Miami, Florida, Michigan, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Oklahoma and Missouri."

Derricks took an unofficial visit to Nebraska and loved it in Lincoln.

"The people were great, and they have a fantastic situation with their football team," he said. "I am certainly leaning toward taking an official visit to Nebraska, but because I have already been there, I may visit somewhere else. I already know quite a bit about Nebraska."

Dusty Dvoracek (6-3 1/2, 272, 4.75) of Lake Dallas, Texas, was recently offered a scholarship by the Huskers. Dvoracek made 77 tackles a year ago, 40 behind the line of scrimmage, with eight sacks. He is a talented offensive line prospect as well, with 101 pancake blocks. Dvoracek went to the Texas A&M mini-camp and has the Aggies, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Purdue in his sights.

"I really don't have a favorite right now, but I have the schools that I want to concentrate on," Dvoracek said. Nebraska has been recruiting me hard as of late, and I have always appreciated their program. Texas A&M has always been a team that I followed, and I like the fact OU is really playing well now. Purdue is another program that seems to be playing well. I look forward to taking my visits."

Orien Harris (6-4, 270, 4.8) of Newark, Del., is another top five defensive tackle prospect who is eyeing Nebraska. Harris had 83 tackles and 11 sacks last season, and his pass rushing ability is a strong point. His brother, Kwame, plays for Arizona, but he doesn't seem to have an interest in the Wildcats.

"I have had my eye on the same schools, and all of them are pretty even right now," Harris said. "I like Florida State, Miami, Penn State, Nebraska, Michigan State, Tennessee and Florida. Nebraska has a great history on defense, and I love the way they play football. The other schools are outstanding as well, and I am working on deciding on who to visit."

Nebraska is close to getting a commitment from Titus Adams (6-4, 275, 4.85) of Omaha (Creighton Prep), Neb., who is the top defensive tackle prospect in Nebraska and a top 20 talent in the country.

"Nebraska is my solid leader, and I am close to giving them a commitment," Adams said. "I just want to go through the recruiting experience, but

# KSU Gets LB; Backs Eye NU

**K**ansas State picked up its sixth commitment toward the 2001 recruiting class, as linebacker Matt Butler of Manhattan, Kan., said he wanted to play for the Wildcats.

Matt's father, Bill, played for the Wildcats back in the early 1970s. The younger Butler is regarded as one of the top five talents in Kansas.

— Oklahoma earned its fifth commitment, when defensive tackle Jacob Hager (6-4 1/2, 240, 4.78) of Perry, Okla., committed, following the Sooner win over Kansas.

Hager wrestled on the USA junior national team at heavyweight, but he will concentrate on football at OU. Hager is rated as one of the top 10 players in Oklahoma and is among the top 70 players in the Big 12 region.

— Nebraska is in the hunt for running back KeJuan Jones (5-10, 180, 4.4) of Jenks, Okla. Jones status is rising as the season continues. He is leaning toward Oklahoma but says Nebraska is a program that he has a great interest in, along with Alabama, TCU and Kansas.

Grades area question mark for Jones.

— Nebraska is considering an offer to running back Dontrell Moore (5-10, 180, 4.35) of Roswell, N.M. Moore is blessed with great speed, and he rushed for 2,145 yards and 18 touchdowns last season. Those totals earned Moore the top prospect title in New Mexico this year.

New Mexico and New Mexico State both offered, early and Army also is very interested, however Nebraska and Texas Tech have continued to call. UCLA has also begun to pay attention. Through six games, Moore has 1,200 yards and 12 touchdowns and is averaging 10.6 yards per carry.

"If Nebraska offers me, that would be very hard for me to turn down," Moore said. "Nebraska has such a great tradition at running back that it would be an honor to play there."

— The nation's top junior college offensive lineman is looking to stay down South.

Milford Brown (6-4, 320, 5.4) of East Mississippi Junior College has more than 25 scholarship offers on the table, but at this point is looking hard at Florida, Tennessee, LSU and Georgia.

Brown said he will visit the Seminoles and Gators in November, and he is considering taking a look at Auburn and Mississippi State. Brown is originally from Montgomery, Ala., and is a December graduate. He had 70 pancake blocks last year and is on pace for more than 100 this year.

— Michigan is putting together a great recruiting class, and the Wolverines took a step toward having the top class in the nation, when top five national defensive tackle Pat Massey (6-8, 235, 4.7) of Cleveland St. Ignatius, Ohio, committed.

Massey's older brother, Jim, is an offensive lineman at Ohio State, and it was widely assumed that the younger brother would follow in his footsteps.

"My brother was happy for me when I told him that I was going to Michigan, but in a way, he was disappointed as well," Massey said. "I told him how great Michigan was for me, and he accepted that fact. I also told him that we would meet up with each other when Ohio State came to Ann Arbor."

— Texas is once again recruiting some of the top quarterbacks in the country.

The Longhorns recently played host to Brent Rawls (6-5, 190, 4.65) of Shreveport (Evangel Christian), La., who loved the food in Austin.

"I had the best steak I have ever had in my life," Rawls said. "I don't remember where we went, but if I do sign in with Texas, you can bet I will find out the name of the restaurant. That wasn't the only thing I liked about the trip, but the food was incredible."

Rawls was also scheduled to visit Florida State. ■

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I know that Nebraska is the best program for me. Nebraska plays for the national championship every year, and I don't for a minute forget just how good they really are."

Adams also has offers from Tennessee, Michigan and Florida and may take visits there as well.

Nebraska already has a commitment from a nationally ranked defensive tackle in Jared Helming (6-4, 270, 4.9) of Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo. Helming was one of the first players to commit to the Huskers, and he is still solid with his decision.

"I walk around with a lot of pride with the knowledge that I have a scholarship from Nebraska, and that is where I am going to play my college football," Helming said. "When I watch their games, I find myself watching the defensive tackles and trying to study how they react to plays and how they handle certain situations. I almost follow their progress as if I was already on the team."

Kickapoo is off to a 4-1 start, and Helming is starting both ways. He is grading out over 90 percent on offense and thus far has 20 solo stops, 44 total tackles and two sacks on defense. ■

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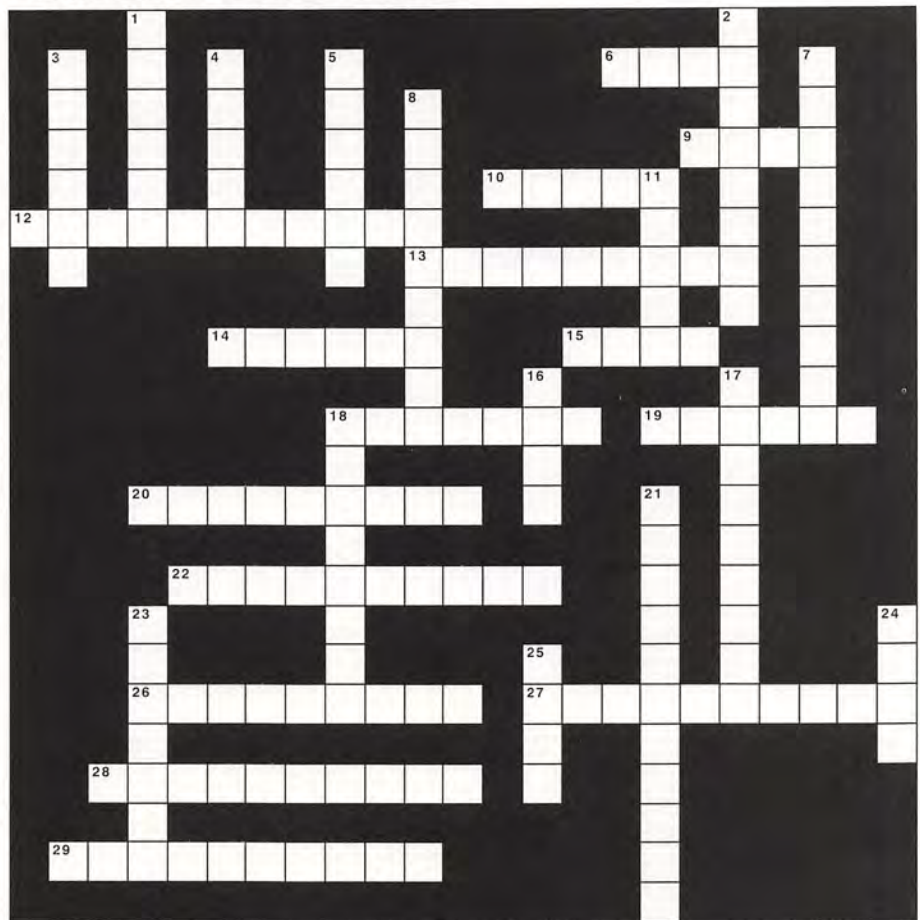
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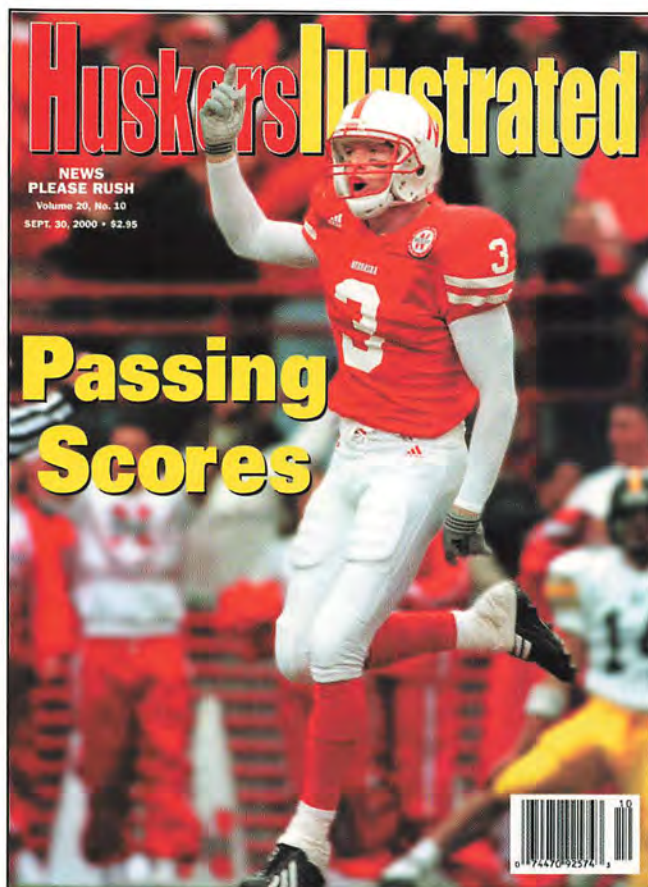
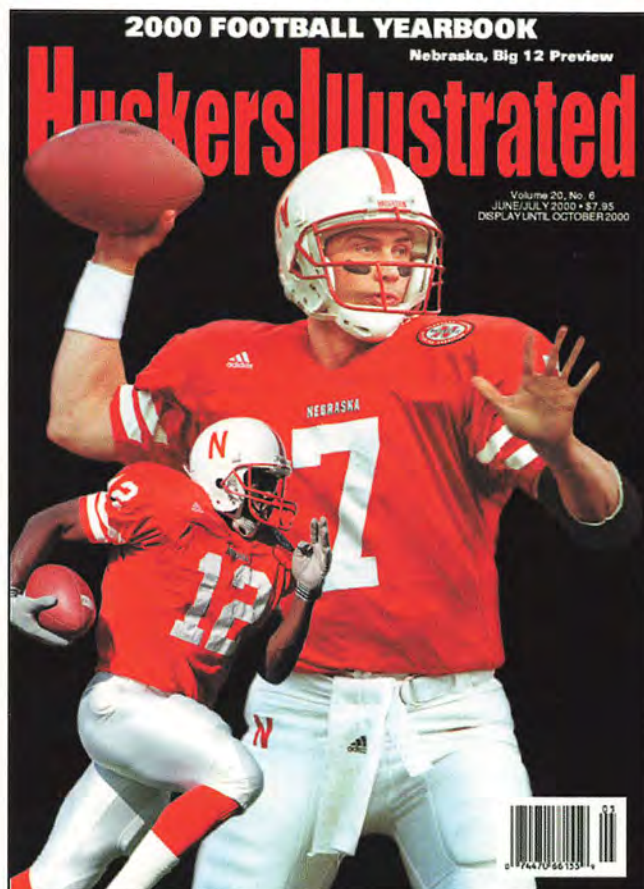
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# . . . ALL THE TIME

## A Step Forward

**Blackshirts show improvement in slowing Tech's passing game**



**Mike BABCOCK**

THE HOST of a post-game radio show in Lubbock tried to put Texas Tech's 56-3 loss to No. 1-ranked Nebraska in perspective. Interestingly enough, he used hyperbole to do it.

The Cornhuskers are the best team in the nation, he said.

And that includes the NFC's East Division, he added.

Nebraska isn't ready to take on even the weakest teams in the National Football League just yet. But the Cornhuskers do seem to be taking on the look of national championship contenders.

And much of that look is a result of their defensive play against Texas Tech.

No one has questioned Nebraska's offensive potential, as long as Eric Crouch is reasonably healthy. The junior quarterback even got to take the fourth quarter of the Texas Tech game off, which was probably as much a highlight of the victory as the play of the defense. Crouch has needed a break, which is why he was told to take off practice on the Wednesday before the game.

He and split end Matt Davison watched in sweat clothes, from a golf cart.

But I digress. The subject here is defense.

As always, Nebraska defensive coordinator Craig Bohl wasn't about to go overboard in his praise of the Blackshirts, who were playing without tackle Loran Kaiser for the second week in a row.

But Bohl was complimentary of the defense, and with a little prodding from reporters, acknowledged what Coach Frank Solich had indicated just a few minutes earlier.

"From the sideline, I think that was our best performance so far," Bohl said.

The implication, however, was that he'd have to study the videotape before passing final judgment.

Still, "I think it's a step forward," he said.

The Cornhusker defense hasn't lacked effort this season. But judged statistically, it has been less than impressive at times. Most recently, for example, Missouri gained 492 total yards against the Blackshirts, and Iowa State quarterback Sage Rosenfels passed for 346 yards against them.

Bohl has expressed the situation metaphorically.

"You have a damn and there's three holes in it," he said. "And you've got two plugs. You just keep moving those two plugs around. You're hoping to finally get everything solved, but you get something settled down and then something over here goes pop . . ."

"It can be frustrating. But what you have to realize is that the players are out there working hard. They do have ability. And what you've got to do is just keep on encouraging them."

Such encouragement appears to be paying off.

A Texas Tech team that had been averaging 382 yards of offense managed only 200 yards against the Cornhuskers, with 181 of those yards coming by passing — well below Tech's average.

"I think a lot of people were questioning us," said Nebraska free safety Troy Watchorn.

"I think this is a huge step in the right direction for us."

Everyone on defense took that huge step, according to Bohl, who declined to identify one defensive player to whom he would have awarded a Texas Tech game ball.

"We've talked so much about 11 men against the run, 11 men against the pass," he said.

If the Cornhuskers are to play championship-caliber defense, each one must do his part.

That's why they were so successful in dealing with Tech quarterback Kliff Kingsbury, who proved his toughness if nothing else against the Blackshirts. He got knocked down a lot. And he got up cursing a couple of times, according to middle linebacker Carlos Polk. But he never backed down.

Nebraska was successful in containing Kingsbury's control passing because of the play up-front as well as in the secondary, where most of the attention gets focused in such situations.

"Once you get good pressure, look for good things to happen from us," said rover Joe Walker.

A case in point was his interception and 19-yard return for a touchdown.

"We played good today, but next week we've got to play better," Walker said.

Although the Texas Tech game understandably gave the Blackshirts a big boost in confidence, "they're a long way from being overconfident," Bohl said.

Implicit in the post-game questions was a comparison between Tech's offense and Oklahoma's offense, which was designed by first-year Red Raider Coach Mike Leach last season.

Though Nebraska's coaches have sidestepped questions about the undefeated Sooners, their return to the schedule is blowing like a hot wind from what is now the very near future.

Before he would even answer reporters' questions after the game, Bohl complimented his players. "I'd like to say we're really pleased with the effort of the players," he said.

"We're pleased with our progress. But we've got a long way to go."

Solich echoed that. "The thing we've been seeing is, this defense is getting better," he said.

The defense has refrained from using inexperience as an excuse.

But it no longer can be used as an explanation either. ■



**Craig Bohl says the Husker defense is making progress.**

**Mike Babcock** is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years.

Mike can be reached at [mdb@inetnebr.com](mailto:mdb@inetnebr.com) or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

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